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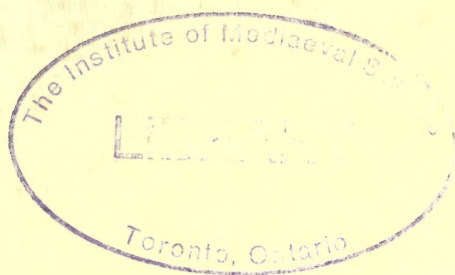
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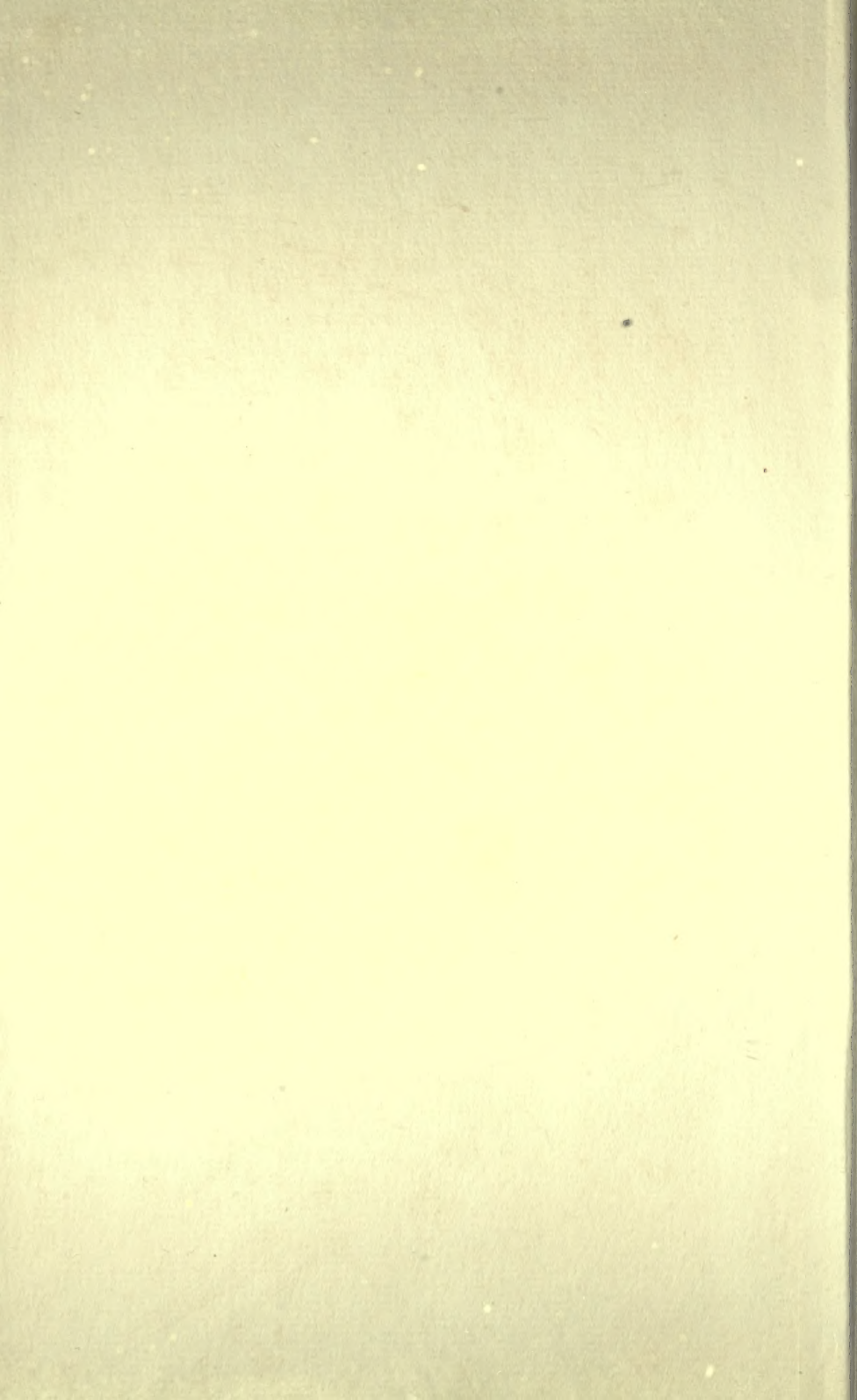




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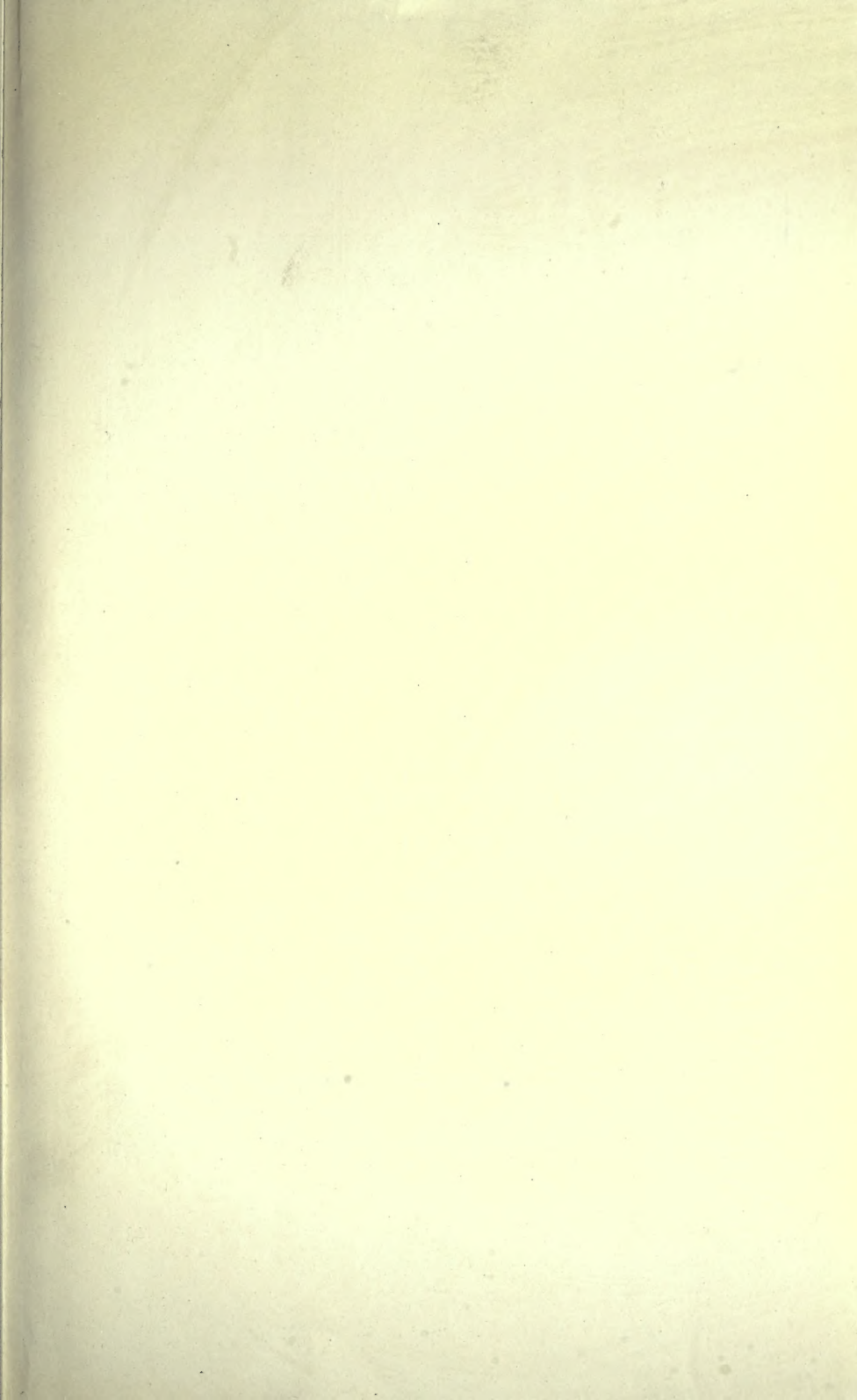




THE PRIORY AND MANOR OF  
LYNCHMERE AND SHULBREDE









THE PRIORY

(From Grose's "Antiquities," 1782)



# The Priory and Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede

Being records of Shulbrede Priory, the Village  
of Lynchmere and the surrounding  
neighbourhood

BY

ARTHUR PONSONBY

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR*

Taunton

BARNICOTT AND PEARCE, THE WESSEX PRESS

1920



IN PIAM MEMORIAM  
PRIORUM ET CANONICORUM  
PRIORATUS BEATÆ MARIÆ VIRGINIS  
SANCTI EUSTACII ET SANCTÆ CRUCIS  
DE SHULBREDE  
ORDINIS SANCTI AUGUSTINI



There is not an acre, I think, I may say, in England, certainly there is not a parish or a manor that has not its place in English history . . . and there is not, I think, an intelligent person in England who is not in one way or another a sharer in such interests of tradition if he would or could realise it. By realising your own personal connection with these, you realise your historical relation to the progress of your country, and, by working out the details of the local or personal history in which you are so interested, you may yourself largely contribute to the ascertaining of historical truth in detail. Every parish must have a history, every parish has a register, every person has a parish.

Stubbs' *Mediæval and Modern History*.

## PREFACE

I HAVE been collecting at intervals for seventeen years the fragments of information which go to make up this book. I delayed publishing the result of my researches partly because I hesitated to have the records printed at all, partly because I always hoped I might make fresh discoveries but chiefly because until recently I had not the opportunity of putting together in book form the bundles of notes that had accumulated.

Papers in the Sussex Archæological Society's Collection have been of great value to me as a starting point for further research. The Sussex Record Society's volumes, County histories and books on monastic life have also been very helpful. Court Rolls, church registers and more especially Wills have furnished material for records of the later centuries. But in work of this sort a ray of light may come from quite unexpected quarters and I realise that I may have by no means exhausted all the possible fields of discovery.

My thanks are due to many people for their kind assistance. Mr. Charles Strachey has throughout given me most valuable help in discovering new channels of information and in deciphering ancient deeds. Mr. Philip M. Johnston and the late Sir W. St. John Hope have supplied information and advice on architectural and archæological points. Successive vicars of Lynchmere have permitted me to consult the registers. The Rev. Duncan Pearce, the present Vicar, has been good enough to allow me to make a thorough search into all church documents and Mr. W. B. B. Freeland has given me facilities for

research in the Chichester Probate Registry. Mr. R. C. Lambert has solved for me some difficult problems connected with old manuscripts and Mr. Alfred Anscombe has given me special assistance in explaining the origin of names. Amongst many others I would like to mention Mr. A. E. Stamp of the Public Record Office, Mr. P. Woods, C.B., of Guildford, Mr. E. W. Swanton, curator of the Haslemere Educational Museum, Mr. Couchman of the Sussex Archaeological Society, the Rev. G. E. Chavasse, Vicar of Lynch, the Rev. A. H. Glenine, Vicar of Lavant, Mrs. F. Pratt Barlow of Lynchmere House, Mr. George Rickwood of the Essex Archaeological Society, Mr. W. T. Johnson, Steward of the Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede, Major Harding Newman, agent of the Cowdray Estate, and Mr. W. A. T. Carter, architect.

The late Mr. Meshak Luffe of Lynchmere, the late Mr. R. James of Lynchmere and his sisters, Mrs. Puttick and Mrs. Aylwin, who resided for many years in the Priory, and Mr. James Hill of Fernhurst have kindly given me from their recollection facts with regard to the Priory buildings and local traditions with regard to places and names. I have also been assisted by my wife and children. My daughter Elizabeth has a profound knowledge of the ramifications of the Shotter family and my son Matthew, born in the Priory, has an unequalled capacity for discovering the sites of long abandoned iron furnaces and has shown peculiar aptitude in deciphering ancient Wills.

The book I fear can only be of interest to a very few people but the pleasure alone of collecting for it and writing it has made its production worth while. Though perhaps quite unimportant this record is nevertheless a little bit of the history of England and may not be entirely without value.

A. P.

SHULBREDE PRIORY,

1920.



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THE VALLEY OF SHULBREDE.

# The Priory and Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede

## CHAPTER I.

### The Remains of the Priory.

**T**HERE can unfortunately be no question of making anything like a consecutive record out of the collection of scattered fragments which concern this very small and obscure Priory and its surroundings. For it will be seen that the occasional disconnected references in registers, rolls, old chronicles and wills, when strung together, are not sufficient to give the reader any complete picture of monastic life in mediaeval times, or of village life in the later centuries, and are not connected with any events of importance which might give them historical value. But I have been assisted by living in the building itself, and



## The Remains of the Priory

my imagination is stimulated and inspired by the curious fascination which only an old house can give. My surroundings seem to call up the presence of the many generations that have lived here before me during these 700 years, so that the baldest mention of a dispute over an acre of land, the election of a Prior, an episcopal visitation, the holding of a manorial court or the smallest incident in the lives of the farmers who lived here after the Reformation, is to me charged with interest, vivid with local colouring, and links me closely to my predecessors in the remote past. I do not expect my readers to feel, though some may vaguely appreciate, such sentiments as these.

If only the daily occupations, the thoughts and impressions of any one of the canons of the Priory were recorded, it would at once cast a brilliant light on the whole scene. But the long days of quiet meditation, the uneventful periods of peaceful contentment are, so far as records are concerned, absolute blanks. It is chiefly the disputes, the reproofs for misdeeds, and the times of need and poverty that are referred to in any detail in the old documents. Although the recital of these incidents may give a very misleading idea of continuous distress and strife in the little community, it is by threading these references together that I must tell my story, breathing if I can into the dry fragments of stone and parchment something of the living spirit of the place.

Old county histories, though picturesque in their style, are generally deplorably inaccurate in their facts, but they render a service in putting one on the track of further clues. County historians of past days had comparatively few documents to consult, but they managed to put a great deal of character and local colouring into their descriptions. Like Horsfield, they wrote about the county they lived in and loved, and in a leisurely way spent a life-time collecting their facts and gossip. The modern method, by which in a few years an army of specialists compile a gigantic book filled with encyclopaedic detail gathered from original documents, although comprehensive and certainly more accurate, is heavy, cold, impersonal and colourless. There is all the difference in the



two styles that there is between what is hand made, and what is machine made. But ancient manuscripts become now more and more accessible, and though the work of research is arduous, it is in that direction, with the assistance of the Archæological Societies, that the real hunting ground for further information lies. Those who have undertaken work of this description alone know the unspeakable excitement of alighting on a familiar name or a promising reference after hours and even days of fruitless fluttering among dusty old volumes. Unfortunately the time really necessary for such preparatory work is beyond the reach of one who has been only able to indulge in it as an occasional pastime.

When Cowdray House was burnt at the end of the eighteenth century, many documents must have been destroyed which might have given more information about the Priory. For Shulbrede as we shall see became the property of the Montagu family from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries until the advent of the Egmonts as owners of Cowdray. As however this source is barren, there is nothing more to fall back upon than the usual episcopal registers, rolls and archæological collections, from which the scrappy information about any small religious house can be derived. But perhaps I have made a more exhaustive search than has been done in most other cases.

Sussex had an unusual quantity of religious foundations, there being at one time or another something like seventy monastic establishments in the county. But except for the great Benedictine Abbey of Battle and the Cluniac Priory of Lewes, whose heads were summoned from time to time to Parliament, they were for the most part small and only of local importance. The Augustinians, who were established in more places than any other religious order in the county, had small priories at Hardham, Hastings, Michelham, Pynham and Tortington as well as their house at Shulbrede.

The Weald of Sussex was in ancient times a great forest which went through the county overflowing into Kent and Hampshire. The fortress of Anderida occupied the site of Pevensey. The Saxons called the forest Andredeswald from

## The Remains of the Priory

which the modern word "weald" is derived. Bede wrote in 731 that it was "thick and inaccessible." It narrows down between two steep ridges in the north-west of the county. To the north the line of hills shuts out Hampshire and Surrey, and to the south, a thickly wooded slope conceals Midhurst and the downs beyond.

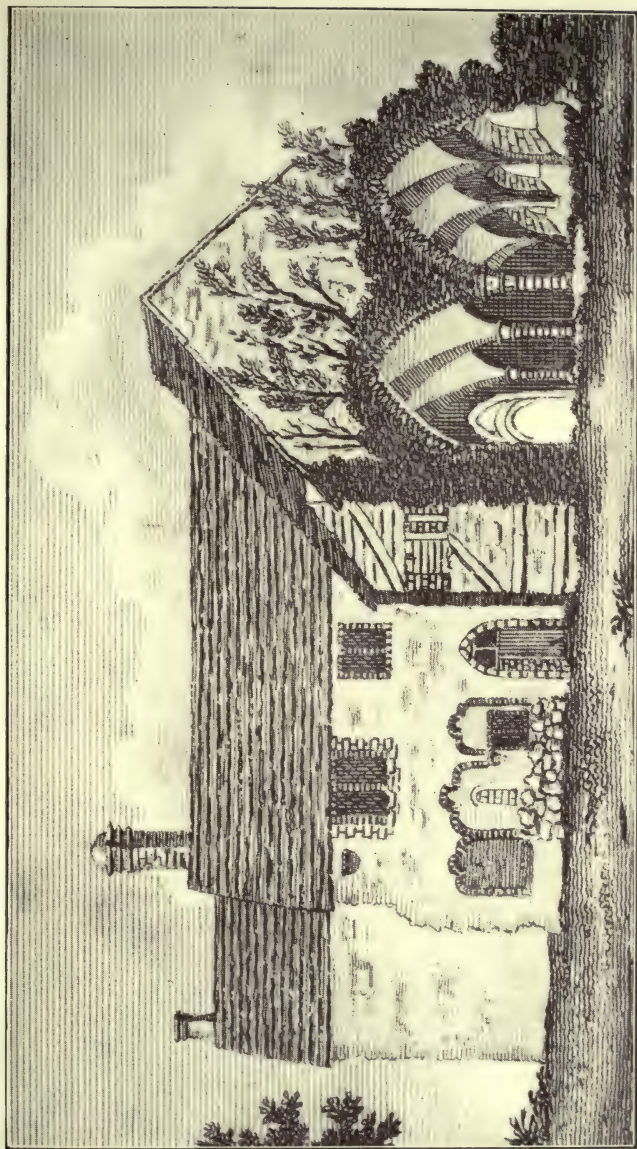
Hardly a mile from Lynchmere church, which will be described later,<sup>1</sup> at the foot of a very steep hill, the Priory lies in an open meadow enclosed between the slopes of Marley and a wooded hill known as Poison Copse. Though the valley is sheltered by the hills around from the north-east, the house stands some 300 feet above sea level. The road from Lynchmere is comparatively modern, for as late as 1835 Horsfield says: "The site of this small Priory is most retired and sequestered. It is buried in a dingle or small valley surrounded by hills covered with woods, and not to be approached even in summer but with difficulty." And Lower (1870) complains: "The remains are approached with difficulty, especially, *me teste*, during the mud of winter."

I do not know whether the architect or the founder was responsible for the selection of the site when an Abbey or Priory was built, but it is remarkable how often they were successful in choosing an exceptionally beautiful spot. Valleys were of course chosen because of the facilities for getting water. There is a letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, published in July, 1799, signed "Father Paul"<sup>2</sup> which gives a picturesque description of the situation of the Priory.

"It stands in the midst of a fruitful Valley nearly encompassed with lofty woods and viewed from the rising ground has a romantic appearance. As it was chosen for religious retirement, the site was well calculated for its institution, for in this secluded spot the canons had but little intercourse with mankind; and their dreadful oath might be observed in the days of its prosperity. A delightful stream flowed through the valley, and watered the gardens of the Priory. . . . The House is now dwindling to decay, and a few years more will

1. p. 161.

2. *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. LXIX, p. 641.



NORTH VIEW OF THE PRIORY  
(From "The Gentleman's Magazine," 1799)







level it with the ground. No remains of this venerable structure will then exist to show the antiquary where it stood.

Yet time has seen, that lifts the low  
And level lays the lofty brow,  
Has seen this broken pile complete."

In spite of Father Paul's gloomy forebodings, almost as much of the building now stands as he saw at that time, judging by the engraving which accompanies his description.

One of the prettiest views of the house can be seen from Hollycomb Hanger, looking eastward down the steep slope to the Lynchmere valley below, where soft folds of wood clothe the hillsides for miles around, with here and there a small patch of green meadow and a thin white ribbon of road. Nestling far away at the bottom, the high pitched warm red roof and grey stone gable of Shulbrede stand up solitary among the trees, with a clump of tall beeches as a background. From the road the house attracts attention by its peculiar height and half ruined appearance, its fine old red brick chimney stacks, stone mullioned windows and buttress. You may overhear the remarks of passers by: "That must be some old church," or "There's a funny looking tumble-down old place," and the more knowing explain "That is the old haunted Priory."

Before the fourteenth century, Normandy, still a province of the English Crown, was easily reached from the shores of Sussex. The architecture of the whole county consequently came under foreign influence, and the finest stone from the quarries near Caen was brought over for building purposes. It was partly out of this stone that the Priory was built towards the close of the twelfth century. But local stone was also used. The remains of an old quarry was unearthed at the bottom of Hollycomb Hill and cut stones of early English design, rejected because of flaws, were discovered. The tradition is that stones for Chichester Cathedral came from here but it is still more probable that stones for the Priory within two miles were cut in this quarry. So solidly were the walls of the Priory built that despite the ruin caused by the ruthless

attacks of the weather and the neglect and depredations of men, the small corner that was not actually demolished is still inhabitable, and inhabited after more than seven centuries, and far more completely retains the character of its original design in the interior than is usually the case in buildings of this size.

At first the exterior walls were whitewashed and the roof may have been thatched although tiles were used even in Norman days.<sup>1</sup> It is, however, doubtful whether the building of the middle ages was all that it should have been. Peter the Precentor, Rector of the Cathedral School in Paris in the twelfth century, wrote at some length in his *Verbum Abbreviatum* of "the superfluity, curiousness and sumptuosity of buildings."

"How far," he exclaims, "are we departed from the simplicity of the ancients in this matter of buildings. . . . This superfluity and costliness of buildings and stone walls is a cause why we have in these days less pity and alms for the poor, since we are not rich enough to feed them while we spend also upon such superfluous expenses. And monastic and ecclesiastical edifices are raised from usury among covetous men, and whatsoever is built from ill-gotten gains is in much peril of ruin. . . . They suffer robbers and usurers to build them dormitories and refectories for a sign and an eternal memorial of their covetousness; though they should not have suffered this even had the money belonged to good men, but should rather have bid them supply such moneys to the feeding of the poor and the redemption of captives."

In any case, many of their buildings are still standing, and show a grace, beauty and—the very essence of good architecture—balanced proportion, which, in spite of all our modern mechanical appliances, we may look for in vain in the buildings of to-day.

At the risk of falling into the style of a guide book, I must make some attempt to describe the remnant of the Priory that now stands. A building that has been constantly broken and patched up is naturally full of curious irregularities such as

1. "The English Parish Church," p. 288.

wasted spaces, steps, odd angles, puzzling corbels, blocked doors and uneven beams, the sort of peculiar features which modern architects are often fond of imitating but which transferred to a new structure become quite meaningless. The house has characteristics which may excite interest in almost anyone even without special archæological knowledge, though perhaps I ought to add that they must be endowed with some slight artistic perceptions, otherwise they would agree with the workman who helped me in with my furniture when he remarked: "Well, you've got pretty country round about you to make up for living in a place like this," or with the parlour-maid who came to the Priory seeking a situation. "Is this Shulbrede Priory?" she asked the gardener at the gate. He told her it was. "Thank you," she said, "I don't want to see no more," and without even entering the house, she turned and went.

The Chapel was on the north side of the cloisters, but it has quite disappeared. I have not been able to trace the outline of the foundations with any accuracy, although an immense quantity of loose stone has been dug up, and part of the foundations of the south and east walls have been recently unearthed. The drum of a column three feet in diameter, an octagonal respond four feet across, heavily moulded bits of vault ribs, and shafts of small columns are very insufficient fragments with which to reconstruct the design of the Chapel. The stable yard and new kitchen wing mark the site of the Chapter House. The corner of the building that remains is the south-west portion of the Priory, the slypp or passage to the cloisters, the undercroft or crypt and on the first floor part of the guests' house or Prior's Chamber. There is a late eighteenth century print of the West Side showing it very much as it is now, except that the main doorway is blocked up, and there is also a rough pencil sketch in the Burrell MS. collection, which gives the outside of three windows in the cellarage which was then standing.

The ecclesiastical character of the building at once becomes apparent on entering the large pointed arched doorway on the West Side. It leads into a low vaulted hall divided into two



by a wall. The present hall, which was the "slypp" leading to the cloisters, has a modern north window, but formerly it was quite dark, and used by farmers as a cellar, partitioned off into two parts. It was these that early nineteenth century antiquarians referred to as "the gloomy cells."<sup>1</sup>

The larger part of the hall, usually called the "crypt," but really an undercroft, forms a square of twenty-one feet, with two deep arched window recesses. Two arched blocked doorways on the south, one of which in the south-west corner has been converted into a window, the complete pointed archway having been found in the wall, originally led to the kitchens. One arched doorway led into the refectory, the other having been blocked up and made into a cupboard. A fine open fireplace with joggled stonework and traces of a protruding hood occupies the space between the windows. The heavy intersected vaulting is supported in the centre by a circular column, the shaft of which is cut out of Purbeck marble. The mouldings of the prettily decorated Sussex marble capital are badly chipped, and the base, which has been excavated, rests one foot below the present wood-block floor. It might be supposed by this that the original floor was on a level with the base of the pillar. But when the present wood-block floor was laid traces of stone and brick were discovered only a few inches down resting on a clay floor into which a quantity of wood ash had been trodden. It is clear therefore that the pillar which may be of a later date than the rest of the crypt and removed perhaps from the ruined chapel, was sunk below the level of the old floor. On the other hand precisely the same design of pillar and low flooring may be found in the crypt of Lambeth Palace; and the pillars in the refectory at Battle and undercroft at Waverley are also similar. For what this undercroft was used is doubtful, but situated as it was between the cellarage the kitchens and the refectory it may have been the cellarer's room. Here the brethren may have warmed themselves by the glowing logs before going into the refectory for their meals. In farm house days, with a brick

1. "Description of the County of Sussex"—Mr. Shoberl, *circ.* 1818.



floor at a higher level than the present floor, it was found to be a very suitable place for a dairy. In summer it is deliciously cool, and owing to the low vaulting a blazing wood fire makes it the warmest room in the house in winter, though people look incredulous when I say I like sitting in my crypt in the cold weather.

The original stone staircase to the floor above is still standing in the north-west corner of the hall, steep, dark and mysterious. Servants hurry by the entrance; children love to peer in. Its rounded archway is in perfect preservation, showing the rebate for the door and the remains of the hinge hooks.

On the vaulting of the outer hall incised markings can be seen scattered about irregularly. These are known as masons' marks, and must be contemporaneous with the construction of the vaulting. There are circles, and concentric and interlaced circles, but there is no consecutive pattern.<sup>1</sup> The pointed blocked archway next to the staircase was the entrance to the cellarge, part of which was standing in the early nineteenth century, with vaulting supported by three octagonal piers of stone. But the upper story had already been destroyed at that time. This ruin was demolished by a farmer who cared more for cattle breeding than archæology, and with the stones and beams he built barns on the far side of the road. All that remains of this wing of the Priory is an ivy-clad wall on the summit of which, level with the roof, an ash tree is growing. Grose gives the best description of the cellarge in his "Antiquities of England and Wales (1782)," vol. III:—

Adjoining to the north side is a ruinous vault called by the ancient people of the parish the "Monks' Room." It is thirty feet long and twenty-one feet wide; it has on the south three small parallelogram windows, with an iron bar fixed in each of them. In the east end is a cavern in the wall which now serves for the entrance. The roof is of groined work, supported by two octagonal pillars, from which the arches spring. The whole is not above nine feet high, of which the

1. Similar marks in churches at Eastbourne and Westham.—*Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XXXVIII, p. 43.

## The Remains of the Priory

pillars measure four and a half feet. In the south side is a large gothic door place, and on the n.w. the ruins of a winding staircase leading to what was once a chamber over this vault though now overgrown with brambles, the roof being entirely gone. This building seems to have been once very large, foundations of walls projecting all ways from it. On the south side was lately a large porch taken down. The walls on the n.e. are mostly demolished, and modern buildings erected on their foundations.<sup>2</sup>

There was an undercroft very similar to this at Hardham Priory, near Pulborough, which owing to the slope of the ground was under the refectory.



THE STAIRCASE.

The more modern staircase, which is contained in a small addition of brick and beams taken from the ruins and with a carved baluster of Jacobean date, leads through an archway along a tiled passage to the room which for many generations past has been known as the "Prior's Chamber." It is perhaps a unique interior for a house of this date, for in its perfect preservation it retains absolutely its original character and

gives a complete impression of the style in which monastic buildings of this description were designed. On entering, the first impression is that of surprise that so small a house should contain so large a room. It measures twenty-two feet by twenty-three feet, and its lofty ceiling occupies the whole of

2. The points of the compass in this description are incorrect.

the gable of the roof. The massive oak tie beam and king post are strengthened by two sets of braces springing upwards and downstairs from the four sides of the king post, but the rafters are not exposed. There are two mullioned windows, set in deep arched recesses. The glow of the setting sun sinking behind the slope of Poison Copse can be seen through the west window, and through the latticed panes of the high window in the south wall the moonlight penetrates at night, sending a shaft of cold white light on to the beamed walls. From the outside the mullion between the two lights of the west window appears to have been cut away on either side. The windows in early days were often very narrow. The hinge hooks for the shutters which served as some protection against the weather before windows were glazed, are still in their places. Many windows, even in the fifteenth century, were not glazed or even filled with horn. Two blocked double archways in the south wall through which windows have lately been pierced, show the entrances to staircases which once led down to the floor below. The stone weathering along the exterior of the gable gives the line where the roof of the extension, probably the kitchens, began, into which these staircases led. The room extended originally the whole length of the present building. The crack in the second tie beam accounts for the props having been placed under it, and a partition made, the northern half having been converted into the low adjoining chamber which contains a corresponding mullioned window, the loft, staircase and passage; and the position of the fireplace was changed to suit the alteration.

From its position this room must have originally been part of the guests' house, or *Hospitium*, but it is not improbable that it was subsequently converted into an apartment for the Prior. The canons had very little opportunity of entertaining guests, and their poverty in later years obliged them to make the best of their buildings as they gradually fell into disrepair and even ruin.

The chief feature of the room is the frescoes or tempera paintings, which cover the wall of the partition. There are several examples in Sussex of mural paintings in houses, in



## The Remains of the Priory

an old house at Rye for example, and also at Harting, Cocking and Pevensey. In churches there are many examples, notably at Trotton and Hardham. The designs in the Prior's Chamber are faded, and the plaster is crumbling in many places. But it is surprising that any trace of them remains,



considering that farmhouse children used to play with bows and arrows against this wall. A former old sexton of Lynchmere, who was born in the Priory, told me he was one of the culprits. Three Elizabethan ladies have suffered the most, their faces having served as bull's eyes. Over the doorway, two birds fighting with sword and buckler, part of a fox, the legs of some strange beast, all on a back-ground of rounded green hills, are still visible, as well as a group of buildings with a tall spire, which may have represented the Priory. The arms of James I, with the motto *BEATI PACIFICI*, in another partition, are in a good state of preservation, being of a later date and evidently painted over some other subject. But the fresco in the

corner by the fire place is the chief reason for the Priory having gained some small renown of its own. People still make pilgrimages on purpose to see this wall painting, which is described in all old county histories. It represents animals perched on roughly painted green hills, with scrolls issuing from their mouths, on which are inscribed Latin words resembling their natural cries. The cock cries :



"CHRISTUS NATUS EST;" the duck asks: "QUANDO, QUANDO?"; "IN HAC NOCTE," is the raven's reply. "UBI UBI," inquires the bull, and the lamb answers: "IN BETHLEM." On the top of the panel is the inscription:—

"ECCE CONCIPIET VIRGO ET PARIET FILIUM ET VOCABITUR NOMEN EJUS EMANUEL, ISAI."

Below the figures is written the following verse:—

"GLORIA TIBI DOMINE  
QUI NATUS ES DE VIRGINE  
CUM PATRE ET SANCTO SPIRITU  
IN SEMPITERNA SAECULA. AMEN."

On the cross beam at the bottom are the last words of the psalms: "OMNIS SPIRITUS LAUDET DOMINUM . PSAL."

The date of this wall painting, I am assured by experts is not earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century. The use of Latin points to its being of pre-Reformation origin. I should prefer to say it was the work of one of the canons rather than that of a post-dissolution resident, but I cannot do so with any certainty.

The idea of the artist comes originally from the legend that all animals become articulate on Christmas Day (just as cattle are supposed to kneel on December 14th—old Christmas day). There was a Mass, not unusual in the middle ages, in which the choristers took the parts of various animals and birds. In some of the rural districts of Brittany and Gascony it is still performed. A sheet of carols, published in 1701, has a broadside showing the Virgin and Child in the stable, and the animals which surround the group are represented with almost the same calls. Down the side is the following explanation:—

"A religious Man inventing the Conceits both for the Birdes and Beasts drawne in this picture of our Saviour's Birth doth thus express them:

The Cock croweth: '*Christus natus est* (Christ is borne).'

The Raven asked: '*Quando?* (when).'

The Crow replied: '*Hac nocte* (this night).'

The Ox cried out: '*Ubi? Ubi?* (where, where).'

## The Remains of the Priory

The Sheep bleated out : ‘ *Bethlem, Bethlem.*’

A voyce from Heaven sounded : ‘ *Gloria Excelsis* (glory be on high).’

Whilst armies of Angels sang : ‘ Halleluiah ! Salutation and Glory and Honor and power be to the Lord our God.’ ”

—*Apoc.* 19, I.<sup>1</sup>

A French mediaeval poem is almost an exact parallel to this :—

“ *Joie des Bestes à la nouvelle de la naissance du Sauveur.*”

Comme les bestes autrefois  
Parloient mieux Latin que François,  
Le cocq de loin voyant ce faict  
S’écria ‘ Christus natus est.’  
Le bœuf d’un air lent ebauhi  
Demande ‘ Ubi, ubi, ubi ? ’  
La chèvre se torchant le groin  
Respond que c’est à Bethlehem.  
Maistre Baudet, curiosus  
De l’aller voir, dit ‘ Eamus ’  
Et droit sur ses pattes le veau  
Beugle deux fois ‘ Volo, volo.’

and there is an Italian version :—

“ Il Gallo	E nato Gesù.
Il Bue.	In dôva ?
La Pecora.	Betlèm, Betlèm !
L’Asino.	Andèm, Andèm, Andèm ! ”

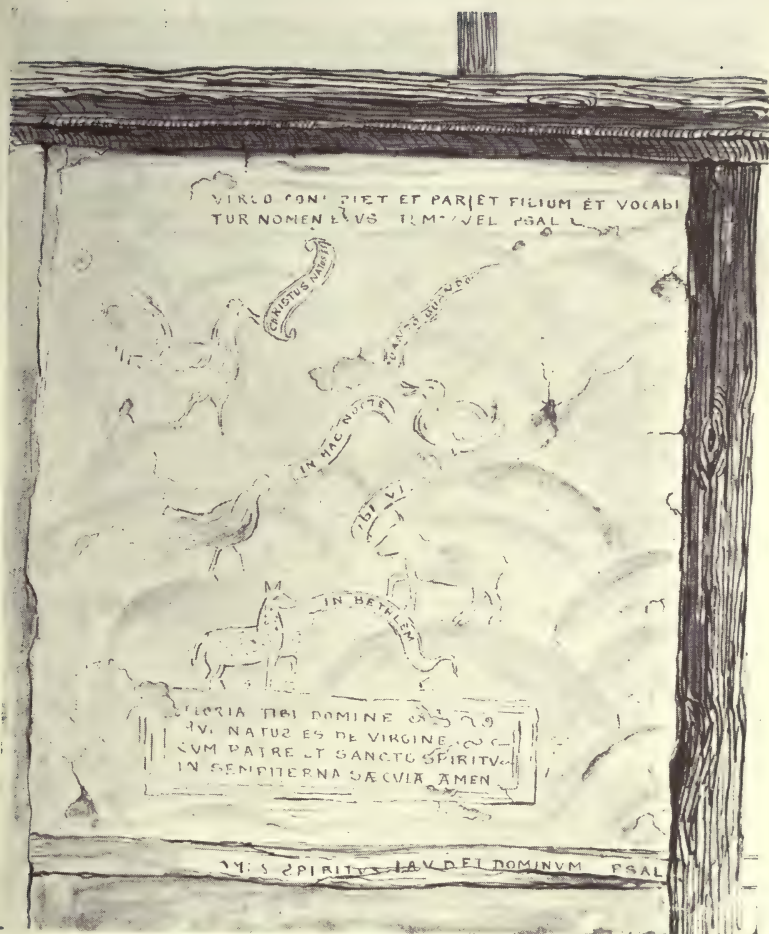
A Portuguese tradition has it :—

“ Quando Christo naxen, disse o gallo : Jesus Christo ê  
na . . . á . . . á . . . dó.”

There is also a version from Madeira :—

“ Em dezembro, vintecinco,  
Meio da noite chegou  
Um anjo ia no ar  
A dizer : *Elle é já nado*

1. Hone’s “ Every Day Book,” London, 1701.



WALL-PAINTING OF ANIMALS ANNOUNCING THE NATIVITY





Pergunta lo boi : *Aonde ?*  
 La mula pergunta : *Quem ?*  
 Canta lo gallo : *Jesus*  
 Diz la ovelha : *Bethlem."*

These versions have been collected and printed on a Broad-side with a woodcut representing the nativity, reproduced from the eighteenth century carol sheet.<sup>1</sup>

Animals played an important symbolical part in mediaeval religion, and in the ancient mystery play of the "Feast of the Ass," during the celebration of Mass the Introit, "Lord have Mercy upon us," "Gloria Patri," and the Creed were followed by a chorus of "Hi-ha, Hi-ha" in imitation of the braying of a donkey. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the celebrant, instead of repeating the accustomed formula of "Ite, Missa est," would solemnly say "Hi-ha," three times, and hymns in praise of the ass formed an indispensable part of the mystery.

To return to the Prior's Chamber, there are more traces of paintings on the east wall, part of a dog and buildings with chimney stacks resembling those of the Priory, a bird and the antlers of a stag, and over the fireplace is a symmetrical pattern decoration, though this is of later date. Rouse, in his "Beauties and Antiquities of Sussex," gives a picture of the Prior's Chamber, which he calls the Court Room, with paintings over all the walls, but as it is very inaccurate in other respects, it is impossible to say whether this was correct, although there were probably more paintings than are now visible. On the floor there are some fine glazed encaustic tiles of varied design, dating from the fourteenth century.

The present dining room is on the site of the refectory. It contains a large open fireplace of sixteenth century date with a chimney crane and ingle nooks and has a low beamed ceiling. It is only on the outside walls that any trace of the original refectory building is visible. The south side just shows the window jambs, indicating that the roof of the large refectory hall was much higher, and on the north wall are interesting

1. Issued by F. Sidgwick, 3, Adam Street, Adelphi, London.

remains of a trefoil headed arcade of early thirteenth century workmanship, which must have been part of the lavatory where the canons washed as they came in from the cloisters. The east wall of the dining room was blocked up with brick and beam in the sixteenth century leaving a space of four or five feet between the outer and the inner wall. This has quite recently been opened out and was found to be roughly filled up with an immense quantity of large stones most of which were faced or carved. Six finely carved stones of a fifteenth century open traceried screen with pieces of the mullions were discovered on the level of the first floor, these were covered with whitewash and in perfect condition; two pillar capitals of an original thirteenth century open arcading,<sup>1</sup> pieces of an archway and a number of smooth-faced Purbeck marble paving stones. In addition to these a baking oven communicating with the large sixteenth century chimney and the oak door to a bacon loft was also disclosed as well as the shaft of a disused chimney which served the southern part of the present dining room when it was divided off as a separate room. The dates of the various alterations and additions are difficult to trace. But it seems clear that there were two main periods after the dissolution in which considerable alterations were made: the latter half of the sixteenth century, when in order to make the ruined Priory habitable the staircase, the large main chimney and the kitchen now a sitting room under the south gable were erected and some period in the early eighteenth century when an additional chimney was added to the old chimney and the southern wall of the eastern wing was built.

In the grounds two ponds still exist, and the embankment of a third can be seen in the south-east corner of the meadow, and of a fourth in the meadow on the far side of the road. There are two ponds also near by in Lynchmere marsh. Two arched culverts of solid thirteenth century work have survived; one connects the meadow across the road with the meadow further west, indicating the old road to Lynchmere

1. See illustration, p. 22.

by which the Priory was approached from the west; the other in perfect preservation lies under the road going south towards Fernhurst and seems to suggest a sluice or dam for filling up the long river bed which runs along the south of the meadow, and which was used no doubt for fishing purposes. In their seclusion the canons must have been largely dependant on fish for food. A moat originally surrounded the Priory enclosing about four acres of land. It still exists on the west side, and partly on the south and east. While a moat may have been used for defensive purposes, there are, so far as I know, no moats attached to other Sussex priories, and there is nothing to indicate that Shulbrede was situated in a more dangerous part of the country than the others. It has been suggested that it formed a defence against wolves which abounded in the surrounding forests, or again it may have been connected with the fishing.

Of a gate house, which is mentioned in the seventeenth century, there is now no trace.

A shed which stood sixty years ago in the meadow near the drive gate may have been formed out of its ruins, as this would be a likely spot for the entrance to the priory enclosure. A gate house, however, was not an indispensable part of a monastic building, and until I came across the post-dissolution references<sup>1</sup> it did not occur to me to suppose that such a structure ever existed. Indeed it is conceivable that the term "gate house" in these references was applied to that part of the priory itself which comprises the main doorway.



CULVERT.

1. See page 133.



The disposition of the buildings of a religious house is generally the same, the only variation being the position of the chapel, which in a few instances, according to the lie of the ground and the course of the stream which supplies water, is situated on the south side. The accompanying plan was made out from measurements of the existing remains, the size of the cellarge as it stood in the early nineteenth century being taken into consideration. Comparison has also been made with the conjectural plan of Hardham Priory<sup>1</sup> which was the nearest foundation of the same order, about the same size and approximately the same date. If the guests' house and cellarge of Shulbrede, the gate house at Michelham, the refectory of Easebourne and the chapter house at Hardham were put together, they would make up quite a complete priory of the smaller type.

Excavations on the site of the Chapel only served to show that the ruins were used as a quarry for road making and building. In all parts of the grounds the spade turns up stones and odds and ends that tell their part of the story. Fragments of columns, chamfered stones, pieces of Sussex marble, stone coffin lids and lead coffins twisted out of shape by tree roots have been discovered in the grounds, on the roadside and on Lynchmere Marsh.

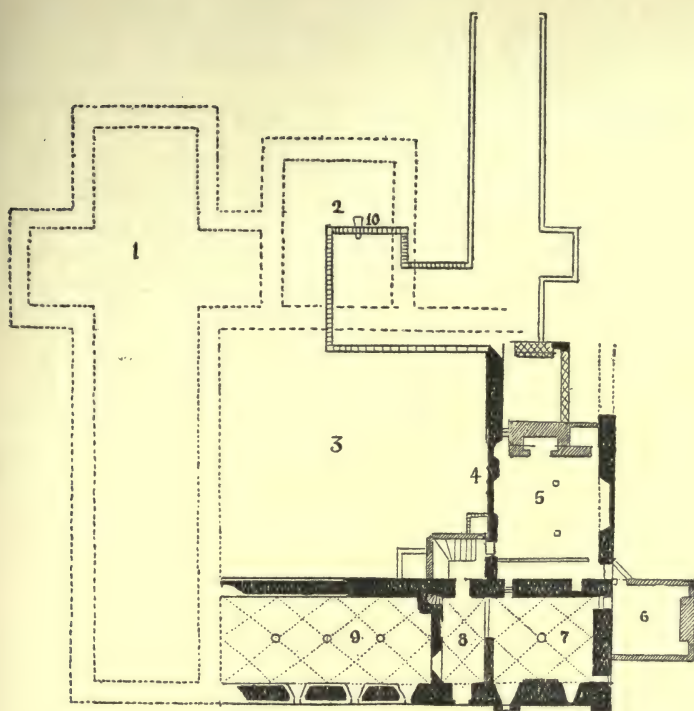
A Fernhurst bricklayer told me his father remembered Mr. Browne who was for many years agent of the Cowdray estate sending men to dig out the orchard and he removed stone coffins, pistols and swords which were found there.

In the seventies a small wedding ring known as a "posy ring" was dug up in the garden. On it was engraved the motto "I cannot show the love I owe" (*owe* meaning possess, as used by Shakespeare). Posy rings which were rings with a verse of poetry (poesy) or motto inscribed on the inside of the hoop were very frequently in use as betrothal rings from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.








An important discovery was made recently when the new wing of the house was built in 1914. On the site of the Chapter

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XVIII, p. 55.





0 10 20 30 40 50 60  
Feet

-  Original structure now standing.
-  " " standing in early XIX century.
-  XVI century additions.
-  XVIII " "
-  XIX " "
-  XX " "
-  Conjectural plan of the Priory.

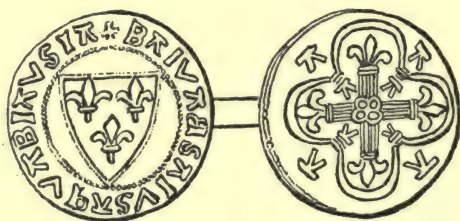
- 1. Site of Chapel.
- 2. " " Chapter House.
- 3. " " Cloisters.
- 4. Arcading of Cloisters.
- 5. Refectory.
- 6. Site of Kitchens.
- 7. Undercroft, with Prior's Chamber above.
- 8. Slypp.
- 9. Cellarage.
- 10. Position of Sussex Marble Coffin.

CONJECTURAL PLAN OF THE PRIORY.

House only a few feet underground a very fine coffin hewn out of one block of Sussex marble was found. In lifting it from the ground the lower portion broke. Its position and material would seem to point to its being the coffin of some eminent personage, possible the founder, although there is no trace of any inscription in the head recess where it was usually placed. Stone coffins were unusual after the thirteenth century and it was the custom to bury persons of note close under the pavement of the Chapter House. If it was the coffin of Ralph de Arderne, the founder, he must have been a very tall man as the inside measurement is six feet nine inches. There was no lid, though there are traces of a lead cover, and the coffin was empty; it had probably been unearthed before but it had certainly never been moved. Several bits of Purbeck marble column shafts and Sussex marble capitals have been dug up, but as will be seen in the records the Bishop of Chichester removed most of the columns "of marbull."

Very few coins have been found, only the following :

(1). A jetten or casting counter of French type made in the fifteenth century at the Tournay mint. It is made of



latten (sixty parts copper, thirty zinc, ten lead). Counters or jettens were employed for reckoning owing to the use of the cumbersome Roman numerals. The obverse legend is a meaningless succession of letters. The **A** on the reverse is doubtless the initial letter of AVE (Ave Maria) and is common on such pieces. The counter is in perfect condition having dropped into a lump of clay.

(2). A leaden casting counter of the time of Queen Eliza-

beth. On one side a crowned rose and the legend "REGINA BEATI" (*sic*). On the reverse side an eagle.

(3). A much corroded halfpenny of George II or a halfpenny bearing his head and belonging to what are known as the Birmingham halfpence which were imitations of the regal currency issued during the second half of the eighteenth century on account of the shortage of small change.<sup>1</sup>

Many broken tiles have been found some of which show patterns very similar to those discovered in kilns near Hastings.<sup>2</sup> It was a common thing for monks to manufacture their own tiles. "The painting and preparation of these tiles for the kiln," says Dallaway, "was among the employments of the monks in their leisure hours in which they eventually excelled and it was customary in the larger convents to have them placed before the altar of parish churches of which they had the patronage." There is an amusing instance of a reprimand in connection with tile making addressed to the Abbot of Baubec in Normandy:—

"Let the Abbot of Beaubec who has for a long time allowed his monks to construct for persons who do not belong to the order pavements which exhibit levity and curiosity, be in slight penance for three days the last of them on bread and water. And let the monk be recalled before the feast of All Saints and never again lent excepting to persons of our order with whom let him not presume to construct pavements which do not extend the dignity of the order."<sup>3</sup>

Pieces of tile have been found on the site of the chapel of rather finer workmanship than the rest. On them can be traced a two-headed eagle charged on the breast with a shield bearing a lion rampant. These tiles were made as a compliment to Richard, King of the Romans, son of King John. A similar tile was found at Durford Abbey near Rogate,<sup>4</sup> another

1. These descriptions are from notes by F. B. Barnard, M.A., F.S.A., by whom the coins were examined.

2. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XI, p. 230.

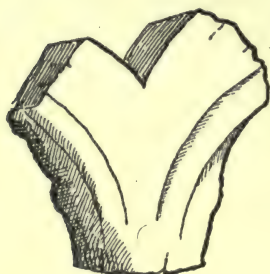
3. Martin's "Thesaurus Anecdotorum."

4. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. VIII, p. 61; see illustration, p. 22, No. 4.





1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1. Stones of Fifteenth Century Screen.
2. Capital of Early Thirteenth Century Arcading.
3. Arm of Early Thirteenth Century Floriated Cross.

4. Tile to commemorate Richard King of the Romans.
- 5, 6. Tiles in Prior's Chamber.
7. Tile at Lower Lodge Farm.



on the site of Selborne Priory,<sup>1</sup> and there is a well preserved specimen in the Sussex Archæological Society's museum at Lewes. There are decorative tiles belonging to the Priory let in above a fireplace in Lower Lodge Farm close by.<sup>2</sup>

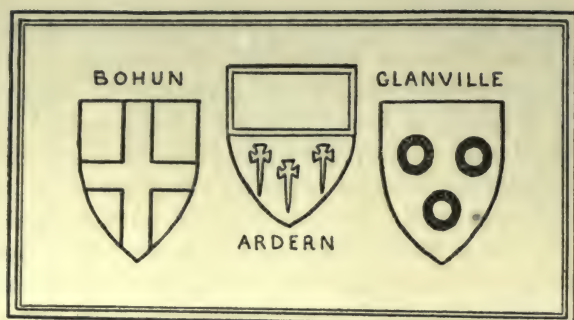
The arm of a stone floriated gable cross of about 1200,<sup>3</sup> the base and capital of a small pillar of the same date, moulded voussoirs and window jambs have been found in the walls of one of the barns which was recently pulled down. In a flower bed on the south side foundations of a wall were discovered with fragments of thirteenth century kitchen pottery and a quantity of oyster shells and chicken bones.

Tombstones and human remains, the bones of former inhabitants, are also frequently dug up. Many canons and dependents of the Priory must have been buried in the graveyard during the 350 years the Priory existed. But the dead, though their mortal remains may be scattered, sleep in peace, and their cowed spectres do not disturb the living. No doubt, anyone predisposed to ghost-seeing, would find the atmosphere of the old house very favourable to visions and apparitions. But to the more prosaic minded, intercourse with the mediaeval canons of St. Augustine is unfortunately not open.

1. Gilbert White's "Selborne" (Sir J. Jardine's edition, 1853).

2. See illustration, p. 22, No. 7.

3. See illustration, p. 22, No. 3.



## CHAPTER II.

### The Founder.

**T**HE PRIORY, though devoid of any striking incidents in its memorials, and seemingly cut off from important historical events, still forms a component part, however small, of the whole maze of national life, into which it fits like a small fragment of a puzzle. Leland who was appointed King's Antiquary in 1533 has a brief note :—

Shelbrede Prior : Can : ord : S. Aug :  
Radulphus Arden miles fundator

And Dugdale and Tanner in the seventeenth century are equally brief but give the total value of the property at the time of the dissolution.

We can, however, throw more light than this on the story of the Priory. But we must go back to the twelfth century for the first beginnings of Shulbredian history.

The Priory was founded in the reign of either Richard I or John by Sir Ralph de Arderne for Canons Regular of the order of St. Augustine, and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. But before embarking on the uncertain question of the actual

date of the foundation, some account must be given of the founder. He cannot be described as a prominent historical personage, as I do not suppose that anyone, even the most careful student of history, has ever heard of him. But in collecting together every mention that is made of his name, I find that he played a part of no small importance in his day. Towards the end of the twelfth century, Sir Ralph figures as a man of some influence in his capacity as soldier, courtier and more especially as itinerant Justice. He was one of the Warwickshire family of Arderne, and he must have been a son of Ralph de Hampton, and a grandson of Turchill de Warwick, who fought for William of Normandy against Harold, and is the largest landowner mentioned in Domesday. (He is entered as possessing forty-nine manors). Of Ralph de Hampton Dugdale says :—

“ Whether he were one of the sons of Turchill, I dare not absolutely affirm, though his posterity assumed the surname of Arden, but do conjecture that he was.”

And further :—

“ Turchill was one of the first here in England who, in imitation of the Normans, assumed a surname, for so it appears that he did, and wrote himself Turchill de Earden in the days of King William Rufus.”

The Ralph de Arderne mentioned as an itinerant Justice in the reign of King Stephen (1140) must be Ralph de Hampton, father of Ralph de Arderne, with whom we are concerned. Ralph the founder died about seventy years later<sup>1</sup> and has undoubtedly been confused with his father. The Hampton estates descended to Roger, a brother of the founder. Dugdale gives Roger as the eldest, but then he confounds Ralph, the founder, with his father Ralph de Hampton, and does not include him in this generation. On the other hand, he does not mention Thomas, whom we know to be a son of Ralph, the founder. If Roger were not the eldest son of Ralph de

1. Dugdale's "Warwickshire"; the "Herald and Genealogist, 1873"; C. Stopes' "Shakespeare's Family, with some account of the Ardens."



Hampton, Robert, Archdeacon of Lisieux, could not occupy that position, as it was very unusual for a noble family to bring up the eldest son to the Church, and as Ralph did not inherit the lands, he must have been a younger son. The accompanying genealogy of this branch of the Arderne family is probably incomplete but is I think in its main lines accurate. I have not attempted to insert dates, which in most cases could only be conjectural.

Ralph de Arderne is mentioned on many occasions between 1184 and 1189 as being on circuit as itinerant justice for the collection of scutage and tallage accompanied by Robert Marmion, William Fitzstephen, Hugh Pantulf and Thomas Noel, in Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire.<sup>1</sup> In these years also he is recorded as having given an account of the Ferm of Herefordshire in Wales.<sup>2</sup> The Ferm or Firma was a rate which each shire was bound to pay for the sustentation of the King, a sort of composition for all the profits arising to the King from his ancient claims on the land and from judicial proceedings in the shire moot. In 1187 Ralph de Arderne was amerced in the large sum of £65 for thirteen days' neglect in attending to the exchequer according to his summons.<sup>3</sup> (An amerciament was different from a fine. Whosoever was fined might lawfully be imprisoned, but whosoever was amerced could not.)

Henry II in his struggle with his barons took a step by which he freed himself from being dependent on the military support of his tenants. He allowed the lower tenants to commute their personal service in the field for a money payment under the name of scutage or shield money. By this means he was able to maintain a mercenary force in their place. He also deprived the greater nobles of their legal jurisdiction and appointed lawyers and courtiers to the office of Sheriff. Ralph de Arderne was affected by both these measures. He

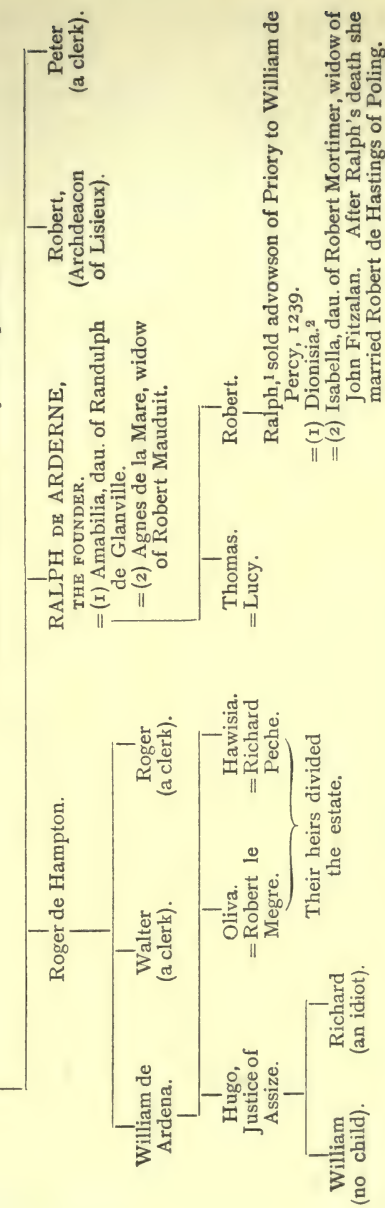
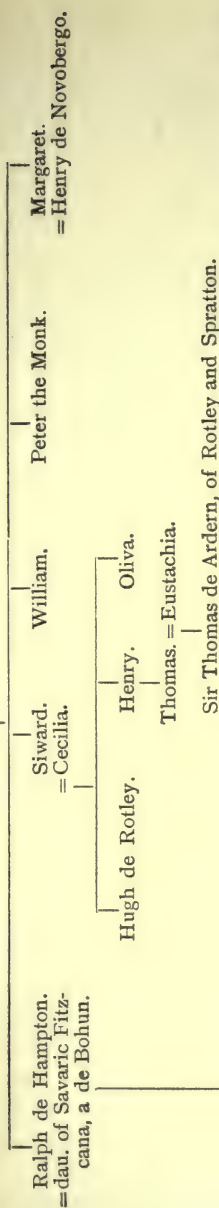
1. *Pipe Roll*, 31, 32 and 33 Henry II and 1 Richard I.

2. *Ibid.*

3. "Madox Exch." 11, 235.



Osbert.



1. While *Pipe Roll*, 6 *Richard I* (1195) mentions Ralph as "filius Roberti," *Cal. of Patent Rolls*, 1 *Henry III* (1217) gives Thomas's wife Lucy and son Ralph.

2. Dionisia had been previously married to Richard Walensis (Waleys). She had no children by Ralph. In 1210, she being dead, her son by the previous marriage, Godfrey Walensis, claimed from Ralph, as his mother's heir, the manors of Glinde, Tering and Patching in Sussex, and Tainton and Newenden in Kent. The result was that Ralph was allowed Patching to revert on his death to Godfrey. (*Sussex Fines*).

held the office of Sheriff of Hereford, and in 1188 he paid scutage.

“Of the scutage of the Barons of England who did not go with the King in the Army to Galloway—Ralph de Arderne renders account of 25s. 4*d.* for the scutage of his knights. He has paid it into the Treasury and is quit.”<sup>1</sup>

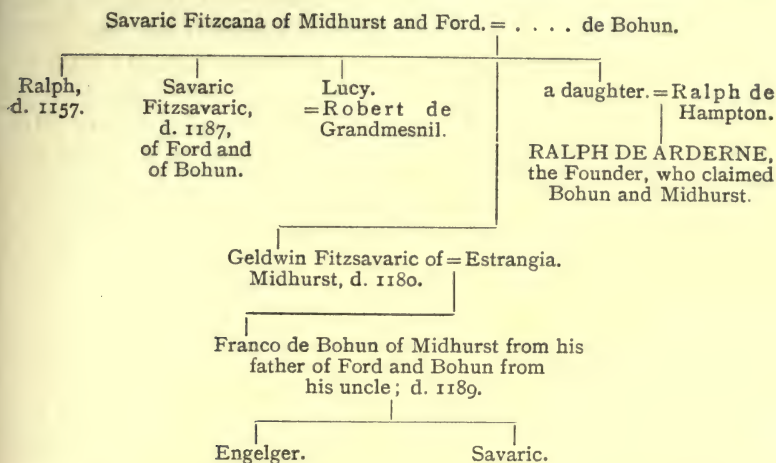
Sir Ralph de Arderne's first wife was Amabilia, daughter of Ranulph de Glanville, the Judiciary of England, whose treatise is the earliest work on English law. Lord Campbell describes Glanville in his “Lives of Chief Justices” as “a rare instance in those days of a lawyer being trained as a good classical scholar and being initiated in all the mysteries of the feudal law. At the same time a perfect knight, being not only familiar with all martial exercises, but having studied the art of manœuvring large bodies of men in the field according to the most scientific rules then known.” Glanville was founder of Leiston Abbey and Butley Priory in Suffolk.<sup>2</sup> This Priory was subsequently endowed by his son-in-law Ralph de Arderne with half the town of Bawdsey. When Sheriff of York Glanville made prisoner William the Lion of Scotland and laid the King of England under an obligation.<sup>3</sup> He died in the crusades in 1190. Perhaps Ralph had his eye on the main chance when he married; for the influence of his father-in-law brought him to the front and led to his employment in the royal service. On the other hand a rather obscure passage in the Chronicle of Richard of Devizes seems to show that when Glanville was out of favour, Ralph suffered in consequence. Literally translated it runs:—

“Ranulph de Glanville, whom no one had surpassed in sagacity while he was in power, was so stupified by his sorrow at being reduced to the position of a private individual after holding high rank, that whatever his son-in-law Ralph de Arderne had gained by judgment and from his mouth, he (R. de A.) lost by reason of that same mouth.”<sup>4</sup>

1. *Pipe Roll*, 1 Richard I.
2. *Dictionary of National Biography*.
3. C. Stopes' “Shakespeare's Family.”
4. “Chronicles of Henry II and Richard I—Richard of Devizes.” (R. Howlett, 1886).

The first indication of Ralph's connection with the county of Sussex is found in a lawsuit with the Bohun (pronounced *Boon*) family with whom as will be seen Ralph was connected. The suit lasted for many years and was carried on after his death by his son.

Before entering into the details of the dispute, it will be well to show the relationship of the various parties concerned :—



Mr. E. C. Waters discusses this suit in "The Herald and Genealogist"<sup>1</sup> and says that there is "no record of the precise grounds on which Ralph de Arderne claimed to be the heir of Savaric Fitz Savaric but from the statement in the fine of 1199 that the proceedings had been taken in the ecclesiastical as well as the civil courts Stapleton inferred that the legitimacy of Franco de Bohun was questioned. We might have suspected canonical difficulties of a different kind arising out of the facts that the male line of Bohun was not extinct on the death of Engelger and that the heir was in holy orders. But as no objection was raised by either side to the succession of Savaric Fitz Savaric nothing but illegitimacy could have disabled his brother Geldwin's sons from being his heirs. If

1. The "Herald and Genealogist," vol. 7, 1873.



the lady Estrangia was the cousin of her husband Geldwin and the dispensation of her marriage was not forthcoming and if, as I believe, Ralph de Arderne was the nephew of Savaric and Geldwin the whole proceeding would be clearly accounted for."

Savaric Fitzcana held the manors of Climping, Ford, Lyminster, Poling, Warningcamp, Rustington, Preston and the moiety of Ilesham with the churches of Climping, Ford, Lyminster, Poling and Rustington. Easebourne, Midhurst and Lynchmere were granted to him subsequently by a charter of Henry I.

In the reign of Henry II, on the death of Savaric Fitz Savaric, a fine was levied to transfer to Ralph de Arderne the Bohun lands in Normandy and also the Sussex estate.

Franco de Bohun Lord of Midhurst the nephew of Savaric, being in the King's disfavour, was unable to withstand so powerful an adversary as Ralph de Arderne, and was therefore compelled by the King to forego his rights and convey to Ralph the lands in question. This fine passed at Caen where the King spent Christmas in 1187. Richard I, however, on coming to the throne declared this fine null and void "as not founded on justice but caused by the King's indignation towards our Franco de Bohun and his family." Ralph renewed his suit, claiming the entire succession of Savaric, consisting of "Bohun in Normandy held in barony and estates in Sussex held in vavasory." It was agreed in 1199 that the manors of Ford and Climping, the moiety of Ilesham, the service of Ralph Sansaver and Ilbert de Rackinton for his tenements in Rakinton (Racton) and £10 of land in Lovinton (Lavant) should be released to Ralph by Evinger, son of Franco de Bohun. This was not the end of the controversy between the two families which I shall have to refer to again.

On Amabilia's death Ralph married Agnes de la Mare, heiress of the barony of Castle Holgate in Shropshire and widow of Robert Mauduit of Warminster.<sup>1</sup> In 1193 Ralph de Arderne was present in the King's Court at Westminster

1. Eyton, vol. IV, p. 59.



at a suit concerning certain lands belonging to Merton Priory.<sup>1</sup> In the Pipe Roll of 1194 he makes a fine for collecting "benevolentiam regis," that is to say, he made a final agreement with the King by paying a certain sum in the name of benevolence (free gift) demanded by the King. In 1195 he received "a gift" from the King of land in Essex for which he paid £362 16s. 8d.<sup>2</sup> The year after his name occurs again as Justice, this time at Lichfield.<sup>3</sup> In 1198 he was Bailiff of Pont Audemar in Normandy.

In 1200 Sir Ralph was entrusted in company with others with a diplomatic mission of great delicacy and importance and was placed in an extremely embarrassing position by his royal master. After divorcing Hadwisa, King John, says the Chronicle of Ralph de Diceto, "proposing to marry the daughter of the King of Portugal, whose fame had allured his mind, sent from Rouen to ask for her illustrious and noble men, namely, the Bishop of Lisois, William de Stagno, Ralph de Arderne, Hubert de Burch and others both English and Norman. But he himself, while they were still on the way, without forewarning them, wedded Isabel, the only daughter and heiress of the Count of Angoulême" (who was already betrothed—if not married, as some authorities say—to the Count de la Marche). What the result of their mission was is not recorded. It is not improbable that the King of Portugal knowing King John's reputation, may not have thought him a very desirable match for his daughter. In any case Ralph de Arderne evidently did not resent being sent on this futile errand, for in 1202 we find him again in attendance on King John at La Suse in Anjou.<sup>4</sup> In 1203 he was sent on a mission to Otho, King of the Romans:<sup>5</sup> and at Christmas, 1204, he crossed over to Flanders in the King's service, as it was customary for a Justice to travel in the King's suite.

1. Heales' "Records of Merton Priory."

2. *Pipe Roll*—Essex, 6 Richard I.

3. Eyton, vol. VIII, p. 247.

4. *Patent Roll*, 1202.

5. C. Stopes' "Shakespeare's Family."

In 1208 he is mentioned as serving as Justice at Shrewsbury.<sup>1</sup> and on January 23rd of the same year (the year ended in February) he was acting with others as joint custodian of all the manors of the Archbishopric of Canterbury.<sup>2</sup> His death must have occurred soon after this as there is no further mention of him, and in 1212 the law-suit against the Bohuns was renewed by Thomas who was his son by his first wife.

Amongst the many legal reforms instituted by Henry II in his realms were the restoration of the King's Court and the establishment of periodical circuits of Justices. By the Assize of Northampton he expanded the system still further by dividing the kingdom into six districts, to each of which he assigned three itinerant Justices. They travelled from place to place on circuit holding regular inquest. The Great Charter fixed the number of their visits to four each year. These judges sat in full Court of the country, they presided over it, and they thus served as a link between the justices of the ancient popular courts and the royal justice, which was dispensed by a justiciar (who travelled with the King and tried cases wherever the court stopped). But the bare record of their presence in the various localities is the only information to be obtained.

### FOUNDATION OF THE PRIORY.

Now with regard to the date of the foundation of the priory there are two dates which give some help. In the Feet of Fines (Sussex) for 1200 we find :—

“ Between Ralph de Arderne petitioner and Brian son of Ralph and Gunora his wife, tenants : concerning two hides<sup>8</sup> of land in Wlenchmere (Lynchmere) about which there had been a suit between them. Brian and Gunora acknowledge

1. Eyton, vol. VIII, p. 247.

2. Rot. Pat., 9 John.

3. A *hide* of land was a varying quantity of from 96 to 126 acres in accordance with its quality and was another name for ploughland, *viz.* land which could be tilled by one plough and a team of eight oxen. A *virgate* or *yard land* was a quarter-hide.

the said land to be the right of the said Ralph de Arderne to be held by the service of the third part of one knight's fee. For this composition Ralph de Arderne gave Brian and Gunora 75 marks."

This Brian who was owner of the land in Lynchmere on which the priory stands before it was purchased by the founder was a great grandson of Ralph Fitz Brian, Lord of Steeple in Essex, and of Great Bricet in Suffolk and founder of Stanesgate Priory, Essex. He succeeded his father Ralph in 1185 and was living in 1218.<sup>1</sup> His wife Gunnora or Gunnor must have been an heiress as their names always occur together. Brian and Gunnora are mentioned in the settlement of a suit with Henry Abbot of Séez early in 1209 concerning the advowson of the Church in Cocking. Gunnora received from the Abbot "a palfrey of the price of 20s." (This seems to have been a common form of payment. A new elected Abbot often received a large sum from monastic tenants under the name of "providing him a palfrey." Also on doing homage to the King the fee paid to the Marshall by Abbots or Priors holding a whole barony was a palfrey or the price of it.)<sup>2</sup> There is also mention of a dispute between Brian and Gunnora and the Abbot of Merton in 1205-6 concerning the advowson of the church of Malden.<sup>3</sup>

But we need not trace the history of this couple further. It is sufficient to know that they originally held land in Lynchmere and that Ralph de Arderne had purchased it from them before the year 1200.

The next bit of evidence occurs in 1207 and 1208 and shows us the Priory established.

"Ralph de Arderne has the Priory of Wlenchmere with all its belongings during the King's pleasure and shall answer for it henceforth."<sup>4</sup> This is just before the interdict against King John declared by the Pope in March, 1208. It is the first

1. *Trans. of the Essex Arch. Soc.*, vol. XIV, pp. 223-5.

2. Fosbroke, p. 79.

3. Heales' "Records of Merton Priory."

4. *Rot. Claus.*, 9 John, M. 2.



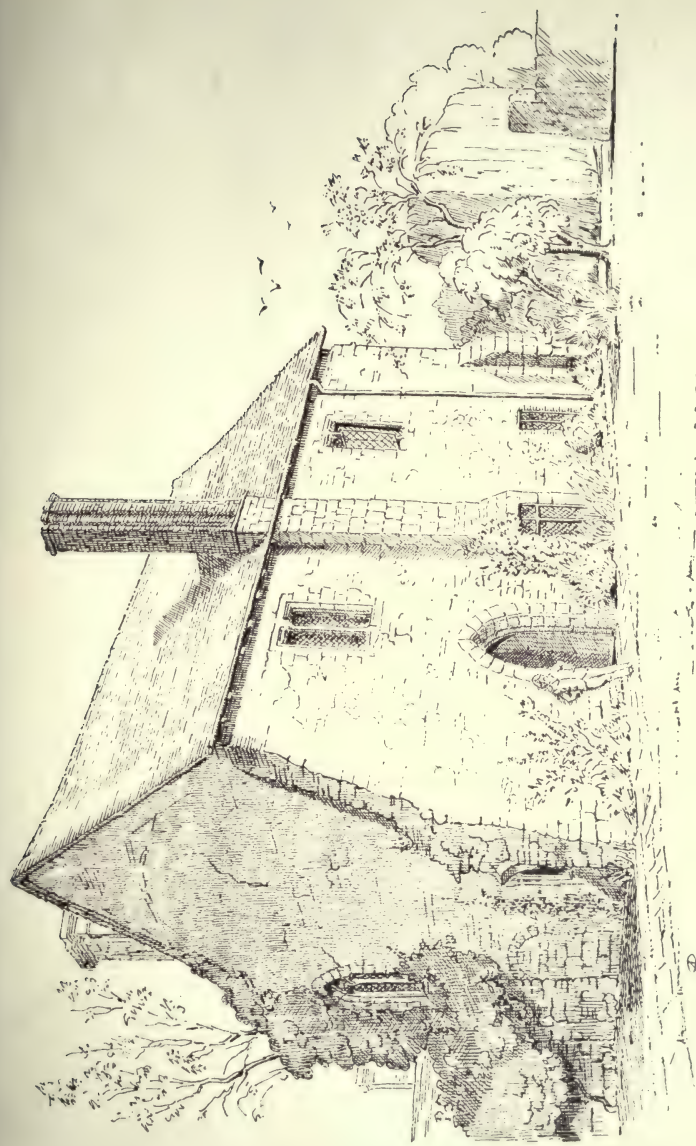
actual mention of the Priory which must have been founded before 1200. This is as near as we can get to the exact date.

The site having been selected, as was customary, in a valley by a stream, there was evidently no stint in the erection of suitable buildings, for we are told that "by the industry and magnificence of its founder the house was originally sumptuously arranged."<sup>1</sup> The other Augustinian Priors of Sussex were also established within this period: Hastings by Sir Walter Bricet in the reign of Richard I, Michelham by Gilbert of Laigle in 1229, Hardham by William Dawtrey in 1234, Pynham (de Calceto near Arundel) rather earlier in the middle of the twelfth century by Adeliza, Queen of Henry I, and Tortington by Hadwisa Corbet in the last few years of the twelfth century. It was in fact the time when a very large number of religious houses were erected in England. The earlier Saxon monasteries had most of them been destroyed and there was a great revival of monastic zeal. Monasteries multiplied and spread all over the country while great nobles vied with each other in founding and endowing them. The object was to secure shelter for those who wished to live apart from the world a life of discipline and devotion. These fraternities were looked upon with favour by Kings and nobles who, while giving them lands and possessions hoped in return to be benefited by their prayers.

Whatever may be said of their subsequent history, the religious houses rendered for a time a very useful service in the social and agricultural life of England. It was from these religious communities that the poor and needy looked chiefly for shelter and food; through them learning and letters were advanced and preserved, and within their walls a life of peace and devotion was led by many in the simple communal routine of the monastery.

The Priory was endowed with half a knight's fee, that is to say, about 300 acres, in Lavinton (Lavant). This we gather from the lengthy lawsuit between the Arderne family and the

1. See p. 76.



WEST SIDE OF THE PRIORY





Bohuns which was continued between Thomas, son of Ralph, and Evinger, son of Franco.

*" In the Octave of Trinity 14 John (1213).*

Evinger de Boun gives the King 100 marks to have a writ of Mort d'Ancester against Thomas de Arderne concerning a knight's fee in Fordres, and against the Prior of Shelebrede concerning half a knight's fee with its appurtenances in Lovington, except 7 virgates of land, and the sheriff is commanded to take pledges therefore."<sup>1</sup>

(This is the first time that any form of the name Shulbrede occurs.)

The case when it came on for hearing proved a long one and was described as an assize to recognise whether Francus de Bohun, father of Evinger, was seised in his demesne as of fee of one knight's fee in Fordres which Thomas de Arderne holds and of half a knight's fee except seven virgates in Lovington which the Prior of Selebrede holds.

Thomas stated that Evinger, after his father's death, held the said knight's fee because he held two Honours, one namely, the Honour of Bohun, in Normandy which he held in Barony, and the other in England which he held in Vavassery, and Ralph de Arderne the father of Thomas, impleaded him in the Court of King Richard in Normandy concerning both the Honours but Evinger made the esoin of being taken ill on the way and afterwards of being ill in bed ; an agreement, however, being finally made in the valley of Rodoly before the Seneschal of Normandy by a deed dated Wednesday before Palm Sunday, 1199, and bearing the seal of Evinger which Thomas produced, by which Evinger quit claimed to Ralph and his heirs the land and services aforesaid while the residue of the lands in dispute should belong to Evinger. In answer Evinger stated that he was never seised of the land, nor did he made the agreement.

The result of the lawsuit was a compromise whereby Thomas remised to Evinger all his right and claim to the Manor of

Ford, while Evinger remised to Thomas all his right and claim to Lovinton and gave him £12 of Land in Prescenton (Preston). "But the Prior comes and says that Ralph de Arderne gave him the land which he holds by his charter and the King confirmed it to him. And he vouches Thomas to warrant thereof." This sudden apparent interruption of the Prior shows he was evidently a man of spirit and was determined to keep possession of his property.<sup>1</sup>

Some years later (between 1224 and 1243) the Priory obtained the appropriation of the church at Lynchmere, which existed long before the foundation of Shulbrede. But there is a curious mistake apparently in the confirmation of the Charter which was entered in the Chichester Registers in the time of Ralph de Neville, Chancellor to the King and Bishop. The names seem to have been inverted by the writer, and the church is referred to as Selebrede and the Priory as Wlenchmere. The scribe may have been puzzled, like I am, by the name Shulbrede which at that time had only recently been adopted, or conceivably there may be no mistake and the name Shulbrede was originally attached to the church.

*The Dean and Chapter of Chichester to all, etc., greeting.*

We have inspected the Charter of Ralph Bishop of Chichester, etc., whereas the Abbot and Convent of Sagium<sup>2</sup> by Divine intent of love, have granted to the Prior and Convent of Wlenchmere their right of patronage in the Church of Selebrede, we having seen the charter which the said Prior and Convent of Wlenchmere have; therefore in consideration of their poverty, we grant them a warrant for it with all its belongings so that they deal honestly by that church in providing a worthy secular chaplain and sustaining all the useful burdens of the church, saving to the Church of Coking its accustomed and ancient pension in it and saving to us and our successors the pontifical and parochial rights. We therefore confirm this concession and place our seal on it.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XLVII, p. 5.

2. The Abbey of Séez in Normandy founded by Earl Roger. They held much property in Sussex. Their bailiff lived at Atherington.

3. Reg. Chic., C, f. 66 d. There is no trace of the original grant in the *white book* at Alençon which contains the archives of the Abbey of Séez.

From this time onwards therefore one of the canons of Shulbrede officiated at Lynchmere Church<sup>1</sup> and the Priory was responsible for its maintenance.

Before parting from the founder we must record one more act of his which shows the special interest he took in the Priory after he had founded and endowed it. He obtained from King John a considerable privilege for the house which was the right for "the Prior of Wlenchmere" to hold a fair in Wlenchmere annually for two days on the vigil and feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 23rd). Henry III subsequently declared that the fair was to be held on the vigil and feast of the Translation of St. Thomas the Martyr, and directed the Sheriffs of Sussex and of Surrey to publish the alteration and see that it was carried out as ordered. This alteration of the date is given in the Close Rolls of 12 Henry III (1228), and is the proof we have of the original grant :—

DE FERIA MUTANDA. Dominus Rex concessit Priori de Wlenchmere quod feria quam eis concessit Dominus J. Rex, etc., singulis annis apud Wlenchemere in vigilia et in die Exaltationis Sanctæ Crucis, decetero teneatur ibidem in vigilia et in die Translationis Sancti Thome Martiris nisi, etc. Et mandatum est vicecomiti Sussex quod feriam illam per totam ballivam suam clamari faciat et ei habere faciat sicut prædictum est.

Teste J. Bathoniensi episcopo apud Westmonasterium XXIX  
die Aprilis.

Eodem modo scribitur vicecomiti Surr' pro eodem.

The grant of a fair appears from the very earliest times to have followed that of a manor, and was a privilege which Lords eagerly sought for at the hands of the Crown. The fairs were held on saints' days, and this reference to the Exaltation of the Cross would seem to show that Shulbrede was already dedicated to the Holy Cross as well as the Blessed Virgin. However, it was not until 1404 that the Priory is referred to as having more than one patron saint. The change

1. For description of church, see p. 161.



of date was probably only due to the fact that July was a more suitable time of year than late September. There were many customs and strict rules regulating fairs. Petitions beseeching the King to grant a fair to a certain lord, or to a



THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF  
THE PRIORY.

particular town, or to suppress a neighbouring town's fair, constantly recur in the Rolls of Parliament. It was not a mere jollification, but important from a trading point of view, and was considered a valuable franchise, yielding a revenue to the Grantee in tolls. The monks appear to have laid in the yearly store of necessities from the fair. When the time came for a fair, it was prohibited to sell anything in the neighbouring towns except at the fair, under pain of the goods exhibited being seized. All ordinary shops were to be closed. Such regulations were meant not only to insure the largest possible attendance at the fair,

but also to secure for the lord of it the entirety of the tolls he had a right to. In the large fairs a court of Pie powder (*pieds poudrés*, dusty feet) was held in the fair itself, and all controversies arising out of the transactions there were determined by this tribunal at once and without an appeal, before the dust of the fair was off the feet of the litigants. A Prior and convent

might also have the rights of 'thurset'<sup>1</sup> and 'pillory' and even the right of 'gallows.' As the fair was an important monopoly, when any new grant was solicited, it was necessary to enquire by a jury whether it would be to the damage or prejudice of the King or the lords of the manors owning existing fairs or markets in the neighbourhood. Tents and wooden booths were erected on the open fields so as to form streets, and each trade had its own street. The principal articles sold were ironmongery, cloth, wool, leather and books. This last article became very important when the art of printing spread. In addition to those who held shop booths, all the mummers, jugglers, tumblers and beggars of the road flocked to the fair which was held in the churchyard, and was sometimes attended by much quarrelling and fighting. It was not uncommon to oblige every man to take an oath before he was admitted that he would neither lie nor steal, nor cheat while he continued in the fair.<sup>2</sup>

Most fairs and markets are still held on the same days as appointed in the original grants, which are found enrolled on the Patent Rolls from the reign of King John to modern times. The right of the Prior of Shulbrede to hold a fair is never alluded to again.

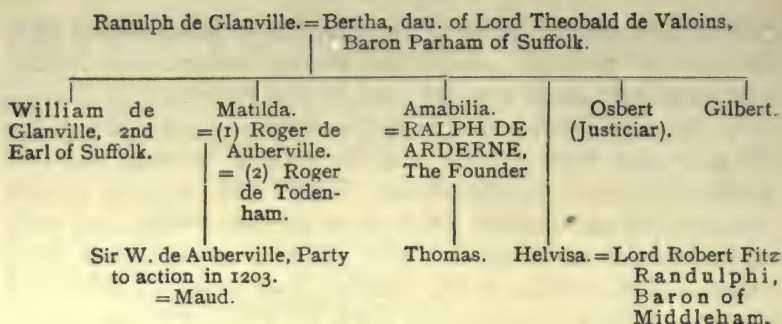
Two more references to members of the founder's family are worth giving. In 1203, Thomas (son of the founder), and Ralph, son of Robert and grandson of the founder, interplead Sir W. de Auberville (their cousin) and Matilda his wife for their portion of the inheritance of Ralph de Glanville, Lord Chief Justice, in the Lordships of Bawsey and Glosthorp.<sup>3</sup>

1. More correctly theweset; the right of sentencing women to the thewe which was a kind of pillory expressly for females. In the *Liber Albus* (1419) the thewe is mentioned in the section devoted to harlots and adulterers and in the list of sentences and fines there is an entry: "*Judicium de Thewe pro putridis piscibus venditis.*"

2. Jusserand's "English Wayfaring Life"; Brand's "Popular Antiquities" (1813).

3. Rolls, 6 Richard I.

## The Founder



Lucy, Thomas de Arderne's widow, claimed from Savaric de Bohun in 1233 a third part of the manors of Ford and Climping as part of her dowry from her late husband. Savaric gave her one hundred marks.<sup>1</sup>

The Arderne family parted with their possession in 1239. Ralph the younger, the grandson of the founder, sold the advowson of "the Priory of Sylebrede" to William de Percy, Lord of Petworth, for sixty-five marks of silver, "with all the service and homage of the Prior and his successors for the whole tenement which the Prior held on the day on which this agreement was made in Wlenchmere, Wildebrug and Midlovinton," for which William should do him the service of one-third of a Knight's fee in Wlenchmere, and half a Knight's fee in Midlavant.<sup>2</sup> (Wildebrug is not previously mentioned—it is evidently Wildbrooks, near Amberley.)

### ORIGIN OF THE NAME.

The Priory as will be seen was originally called *The Priory of Wlenchmere*. The change of name occurs for the first time according to available records in 1213 when it is called *Shelc-brede* and *Selebrede*. And although occasionally at subsequent dates, even on one occasion after the dissolution, it is referred to as the Priory of Wlenchmere, some varying form of the

1. *Feet of Fines*, 17 Henry III.

2. *Feet of Fines*, 24 Henry III.



name Shulbrede more habitually occurs. Examples of the different spellings may be given :—

Shelebrede .	I213	Schulebrede .	I342
Selebrede .	I227	Shulbrede .	I354
Sylebrede .	I239	Schulbrede .	I380
Sulebred .	I274	Sholbrede .	I385
Schelbrede .	I299	Shulbred .	I411
Schelebrugg .	I310	Shelbrede .	I427
Silebrede	I316	Shulbred .	I449
Shulbred }		Shylbrede .	I459
Scheluebred }		Shullbredde .	I531
Shelbred .	I329	Shulbredde .	I532
Shelebrede .	I335	Shulbredd .	I533
Schulbred .		I534	

and after the dissolution generally either Shilbred, Shulbread, Shulbred or Shulbrede. The manor was known as the manor of Wlenchmere and Shelbred and latterly of Lynchmere and Shulbrede.

Mr. Alfred Anscombe, M.R. Hist. Soc., has kindly supplied me with the following explanation of the origin of the name.

“The *e* (which occurs as the second syllable in the early forms) indicates *a* or *an* the possessive case of weak nouns in *a*. The length of *e*, *i*, *y* and *u* (in the first syllable) must be kept in mind. The *sh* postulates Old English *sc* and the variety of vowels points to *i* infection: *ū*, *ȳ*, *ī*, *ē*. Now, a personal name is indicated by the representative *e* of the possessive *an*. That name is Scufili and the forms follow one after the other as follows :—

Scúfili	Scufila ( <i>cf.</i> Scufelingford, Kent)
Scúfila	Scyf-la ( <i>cf.</i> Scyflingdun, Wilts)
Scúlfla	Scif-la
Scúla	Scé-la.

Sculanbrede is postulated therefore and that means ‘the brede of Scula.’ The form *brede* appears in Chaucer, Robert of Branne and Robert of Glo’ster. It means ‘bread,’ O.E. *brēad*. But the proper name for bread is hlāf, ‘loaf.’ Brede

as in Sussex and Somerset means a bit, a morsel, a portion. We say 'a loaf of bread' and we really ought to say a 'brede of loaf.' The first appearance of O.E. *brēad* alone and uncombined is assigned to the tenth century.

The meaning of Shulbrede, then, is Scufel's bit or portion, *i.e.* of land—just enough to keep him alive. Scufili represents a very ancient name Scubilio. The Sussex Shelves-trode and Shovels-trode may be compared: also the form Sholves-trode (Feet of Fines, 1257). There was a Saint Scubilio. The name is not Brythonic but Saxon."

While this explains the origin of the name it is more difficult to discover the reason for the change. All other Priors in Sussex were called after the place in which they were situated. It would seem therefore that the southern portion of Lynchmere may have been known in early times as Shelebrede and the local tradition gradually got the better of the more official nomenclature.

The Shoolbred family are supposed by tradition to have derived their name from the Priory or Manor. But curiously enough while there are many names connected with places in the neighbourhood no one of the name of Shulbred or anything resembling it can be found in the earlier records. The name as a surname first appears in Scotland. The earliest member of the family that can be traced is John Schuilbraid or Schulbred, born about 1560, to whom and his wife, Janet Hog, a piece of land in Pitmunzies in the Bondhalff of Auchtermuchty in Fife was sold in 1578.<sup>1</sup> This land was held successively by his son John, by Thomas 1661, by Walter 1663, by Margaret heir of Allan 1664, and by Elizabeth heir of Thomas 1685.<sup>2</sup> The last piece of land in Kinesswood belonging to William Shoolbred was sold in 1828. There are members of the family in Dunfermline and other parts of Fife to this day. Henry Shoolbred, baptized at Auchtermuchty in 1759, came to London and his son James founded the well-known firm.<sup>3</sup>

1. Record of the Great Seal of Scotland (1593-1608); *Exchequer Rolls for Scotland*, vol. XXIII, p. 276.

2. Chancery records of Inquisition Returns.

3. Information from Mr. Rupert Shoolbred.

There is no record of any member of the family having lived in any other part of Scotland. This points to the fact that the family was originally English. Had it been a Scottish one, one of its members would almost certainly have gravitated to the Capital but for several centuries the name does not appear in the Edinburgh Records. Records before 1544 are missing in Scotland as many were destroyed when Holyrood was burned.

It has been suggested that Auchtermuchty being near Falkland the first Shoolbred may have been brought to Falkland as a craftsman or some kind of servant in the King's employment. That, however, must have been somewhat earlier as Falkland ceased to be used as a royal residence about 1537. Anyhow, the actual links between Sussex and Fife are unfortunately missing.



TILE.





COULTERSHAW MILL.

### CHAPTER III.

#### Possessions of the Priory.

**F**ROM the Arderne family the patronage of the Priory passed to the Percies of Petworth in 1239. The honour of Petworth was conferred in the twelfth century on Joscelin de Louvain, husband of Lady Agnes Percy by his sister, Queen Adeliza of Brabant, second wife of Henry I. The property, which lies about eight miles to the south-west of Shulbrede, descended through the Percies who became Earls of Northumberland, and the Wyndhams, Earls of Egremont, to the present owners ; who are Wyndhams bearing the title of Baron Leconfield. A change of patron would make very little difference to the canons of Shulbrede, but in this case the Percy family at once showed a special interest in the little community of farmers, so that at the time of the dissolution the Earl of Northumberland is referred to as " the founder."

After the Percies had become Earls of Northumberland they still held their estates in Sussex and their mansion at Petworth which Henri de Percy, first Baron Alnwick, had received a license from Edward II " to fortify and crenelate for himself

and his heirs for ever." It was, however, only in the early days that they exercised any direct patronage over the Priory. "The fourth William Lord Percy after the death of Agnes, his grandame and Henry, his father, and Richard, his uncle, came to the whole inheritance of his Elders and gatt of Helyn his wife, Henry his eldest sonne, Jeffrey, Lord of Semer, Walter, Lord of Kildare that lyeth at Gisburne, William, Lord of Dunsle, Ingelram, Lord of Dalton: and he dyed in his good age and is buried at Sally in Craven."<sup>1</sup>

This William de Percy showed special generosity by presenting the Priory in 1240 with a mill at Cuttersho (Coultershaw) "with all the suits of his men of Pettewurth and Tulinton saving to himself and his heirs the free grinding of all kinds of corn which shall be used in his house at Petteworth of whatever kind they may be for ever." He also allowed them to take earth from his land for repairing the mill when necessary, and granted that all his villeins at Petworth and Tillington should give the Prior three days' aid each year in repairing the mill pool if repair should be required so often "without victuals of the Prior" (*sine cibo ipsius Prioris*). The Prior was to pay him two marks of silver yearly for the mill till such time as William or his heirs should have given him ten librates of land in a suitable place in Sussex or Yorkshire and then the mill should revert to William or his heirs and the Prior should hold these ten librates free from all secular service.

In return for this grant the Prior undertook "to provide and keep five Canons in the chapel of Shulbrede to celebrate Divine Service for the souls of William and his ancestors and his heirs for ever," and whenever one of these Canons should die, a worthy clerk should be provided in his place at the presentation of William and his heirs, so that the requisite number should be kept up for ever.<sup>2</sup>

William never exercised his right to resumé possession of the mill, and it is included as part of the possessions of the Priory right down to the dissolution.

1. Ex Registro Monasterii de Whitbye.—*Harleian Collection*, No. 692.

2. *Feet of Fines*—Sussex, 24 Henry III.

In 1274-5 there is an entry in the Hundred Rolls (3 Edward I) :—

Rape of Arundel.      Hundred of Rutherbrugg.

William de Perci, in the time of King Henry, father of the present King, gave the religious persons of Sulebred a certain mill called Cutersho belonging to the Manor of Petteworth which is held in capite of the castle of Arundel and is worth yearly £10.

In 1291 a tax on temporal property held by religious bodies granted to Edward I by Pope Nicolas includes the mill as the property of the Priory :—

Pr'is de Shulbrede.

	£	s.	d.
Apud Silbred . . . .	2	8	4
Midlwant . . . . .	4	8	4
Skeplese (Shipley) . .	1	18	4
Molendin de Cotestoke .	2	0	0

Finally in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* drawn up in 1534 the mill in 'Cowtershall' is again mentioned and valued at 53s. 4d.

There is a fine old water mill now standing, probably on the very same site, at Coultershaw at the bottom of the Petworth hill. Horsefield tells us that Lord Egremont had waterworks erected at this mill in order to supply the mansion house and the town with water from the Rother.

I must trace, without entering into too much detail, the history of the possessions of the Priory. Although the legal disputes and surveys form somewhat dry reading, the record would be very incomplete without these particulars, trivial as they may appear. For instance in 1255 a certain Alicia le Kokes presented the Priory with an acre of Land in Falgham (Felpham). The transaction took place between her and Prior Henry. The Priory held lands in Walberton and Yapton, and perhaps this acre was conveniently situated adjoining its possessions. This small gift led to a series of complications. In Edward II's reign Sir John Walewayn, the King's escheator, accused the canons of acquiring it after the Statute of Mort-



main, and without the King's leave sequestrated it. In these documents the patron saint of the church is named for the first time. "The Church of the Blessed Mary of Shilbred." Edward III directed his escheator to enquire into the actual facts of the case and to make a detailed statement with regard to the tenure and value of the land in question. An inquisition was accordingly taken at Yapton at which twelve witnesses gave evidence, and it was found that the land was held of the Prior and Canons by the service of three pence yearly at the hand of the Prior from Wildebrugge (Wildbrooks) and was worth yearly in all outgoings beyond the said rent twelve pence. On receipt of this evidence, the King ordered :—<sup>1</sup>

"Woodstock. March 28th, 1330.

To Simon de Bereford escheator this side Trent. Order not to intermeddle further with an acre of land at Falgham, and to restore the issues thereof to the Prior of Shilbred as the King—at the Prior's prosecution suggesting that his predecessors were seized of the said land of their purchase long before the publication of the statute of Mortmain and that they continue their seisin until now; and that Master John Walewayn, the late King's escheator, took the land into the late King's hands asserting that the Prior acquired it after the said statute and entered it without royal licence and that it is in the King's hands for this reason—ordered the escheator to make inquisition that Henry sometime Prior of that place acquired the land from Alicia le Kokes for him and his church long before the publication of the statute to wit in 4 Henry III and that the land is in the King's hands solely for this reason and that it is held of the Prior."

As land in Felpham is not mentioned later among their possessions they must have parted with it shortly after. All this about one acre of land. The incident is like one of the carved stones dug up in the orchard. Small, detached and insignificant in itself, but yet in its lines and curves giving some idea of part of a larger structure. The whole procedure, the King's intervention, the inquisition, the orders to the escheator, the restitution of the land to the Priory,—illustrate

1. Claus., 4 Edward III, M. 37.

the method pursued in those days, and serve to show that even in so trivial a case a serious effort was made for the proper administration of justice.

In 1340 another addition was made to the property. John de Warren, Earl of Surrey, and Henry de Percy (who was then patron) obtained the King's license to allow the Prior to receive the advowson of the Church of Upmarden from the Prior and Convent of Lewes in perpetuity, "without molestation or impediment of us or our heirs, justiciars, escheators, sheriffs or other bailiffs or ministers of ours whatsoever."

Edward III levied a subsidy in 1341 for carrying on his wars. A good deal of information about the property of the house can be gathered from the record in the *Nonæ Rolls* :—

"It is stated on the oath of Thomas Schotere, John atte Hurland,<sup>1</sup> Richard Popehale<sup>2</sup> and William de Lenchmere all of the parish of Lenchmer that in Lynchmere the ninth of the sheaves is worth 22s. and of the fleeces 3s. 8d. and of the lambs 12d. in all 26s. 8d. and the church is taxed at 6 marks and a half. Also they say that the said ninth does not appear and cannot be touched for taxing the said church because the Prior of Schulebrede has in that parish arable lands which are of the foundations of the said Priory and the ninth of the sheavs is worth 4s. and of the fleeces 18d. and of the lambs 12d. and because the Prior held the King's writ superceding the assessors and pays tenths therefore. Also they say that the ninth of the pannage is worth 13s. and of the honey 2s. 6d. and of the hay 5s. Also they say that the Prior has a water-mill of which the ninth is worth 3s. Also they say that the lesser tithes and oblations are worth 4s. Also they say that the rector of the church has a messuage with a curtilage worth 2s. and arable land worth 5s. as glebe. In Easebourne the Prior of Shulbrede held a certain portion of the tithes which was worth 3s. a year. In Yapton he had sown land for which the ninth was worth 18s. and fleeces and lambs of which the ninth was worth 20d. In Walberton he held 12 acres of land for which he did not pay the ninth to the King. In Midlavant the church is taxed at 7½ marks but the ninth does not appear and cannot be touched on taxing the church because the Prior

1. Most surnames originated from places. Hurlands or Hurnland lay below Henley Hill.

2. Popehale or Poppehall between Liphook and Hammer, *see* p. 182.

of Schulebred has arable land in the parish belonging to his Priory and the ninth of the sheaves of whatever kind of corn is worth 30s. and of the lambs 4s. And since the Prior held the King's writ superceding the taxing assessors since he pays therefore the tithe he does not pay the ninth."

The possessions of the Priory at this time seem to have been pretty considerable. The above-mentioned church of Midlavant and land in that manor which lies about four miles north of Chichester are so prominently connected with the history of the possessions of the Priory that it is worth while to give consecutively in chronological order the various connections in which references occur.

As already stated the founder endowed the Priory with half a Knight's fee in Loventone (Lavant), not to be confused with Levitone (Lavington) some miles away, and when Ralph de Arderne the younger sold the advowson of the Priory the land is again referred to.

According to the valuation of 1291 it was worth £4 8s. 4d., and in 1316 the parliamentary writs of 9 Edward II giving an interesting variety of spellings of the name of this house mentions the Prior as Lord of the Manor :—

"Silebrede, Shulbred, or Wolinchmere Prior of (Prior de Scheluebred) certified pursuant to writs tested at Clipstone, 5 March, as one of the lords of the townships of Midlavant and Binderton in the county of Sussex."

In the same year the Abbess of Tarent, a Cistercian nunnery in Dorsetshire, is also mentioned as having manorial rights :—<sup>1</sup>

Villa de Midlovente et Benderton.

Prioris de Shelvebred.

Abbatissa de Tarente.

In 1354 Sir Edward St. John who was for some time member of Parliament for the County of Sussex granted the Priory the advowson of the Church in Midlavant taxed at 100 shillings a year, the grant being confirmed by the King's writ.

1. "Feudal Aids," 1428.



But in 1358, that is to say four years later, the Priory found that there was no evidence in existence to prove that Edward St. John had purchased it from the Convent of Lewes who were the patrons and consequently Prior John had to go through all the necessary formalities to re-acquire it direct from Lewes. The charter for this second grant runs as follows :—

“ Hugh Prior of the Monastery of St. Pancras of Lewes and his convent grant to John Prior of the Priory of the Blessed Mary of Shulbrede and the convent of that place the advowson of the church of Midlovent with  $11\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land and 1 rood of meadow the glebe of that church and all other its appurtenances in Sussex to be held of the chief lords of that fee by the service which belongs to it saving to the said Prior and convent of Lewes the annual pension of 20 shillings sterling owed to the same religious men of Lewes from that church from time immemorial and the said Prior and the convent of Shulbrede grant the said annual pension of 20s. to the Prior and convent of Lewes as aforesaid when they shall desire to release the said church by appropriation resignation or concession the feoffment of the advowson of that church made above notwithstanding.”<sup>1</sup>

The witnesses to this deed included Richard, Earl of Arundel, John de Bohun, Andrew Peverell, Michael de Ponynys and Henry Tregoz.

The Bishop of Chichester, Robert de Stratford, then gave his sanction to the appropriation in a document which gives a distressing picture of the condition of the Priory and which will be quoted in full in a subsequent chapter. The bargain was now thought to be concluded ; but again a mistake was made, for this time they had omitted to obtain the King's license, thinking no doubt that the confirmation of the original grant from Edward St. John was sufficient. It now became liable to forfeiture under the Statute of Mortmain whereby it was rendered unlawful to give lands to ecclesiastics or for the latter to receive them without license from the Crown and the incident did not terminate until Richard II, in 1385, consented to overlook this mistake and confirm the grant to them :—<sup>2</sup>

1. Cottonian MSS. Vespasian F. XV, f. 1386.

2. Pat., 8 Richard II, Part 2, M. 3.

" Pardon to the Prior and convent of Shulbrede of the forfeiture incurred by their re-acquisition without license of the advowson of the church of Midlovent which without license of the late King they acquired in Mortmain from Edward de Sancto Johanne Knight who gave them to understand that he acquired it from the Prior and convent of Lewes but which because the said Prior of Shulbrede could not find the charter or other evidences whereby the said Edward acquired it he re-acquired of the latter without obtaining the King's license."



MIDLAVANT CHURCH.

The church in Midlavant, which is dedicated to St. Nicholas, dates back to pre-Conquest times. It had originally a short nave and chancel with a very small arch between, no side aisles and a wooden belfry on the west gable. A Saxon window can still be seen in the west wall of the nave. The church was enlarged during the last century, a north aisle being added in 1844 and the nave lengthened in 1872. A very ancient yew stands on the north side.

In 1372 Thomas Wampoul was rector of Midlavant. He had been presented by " John Prior and the Convent of

Shulbrede.<sup>1</sup> There is a letter dated February 2nd, 1373, addressed to the Bishop of London with regard to his successor :—

“Mandate to confirm to Thomas Neweman priest of the diocese of Chichester if found fit after the usual examination in Latin the church of Middelvants in that diocese to which on its voidance by the death of Thomas Wampoul he was instituted by Bishop William (Rede) on presentation of John Prior and the convent of Schelbrede and now doubts whether it was not reserved to the Pope or lapsed by the statutes of the Lateran Council. The Mandate is subject to the usual condition that Wampoul was not a member of the papal household.”

On the resignation of William Mayn, a subsequent rector, the Prior (William Harethorn) appropriated to his own use the rector's income, and the Bishop (Robert Rede) who had been a Dominican friar, allowed this spoliation of the secular parson as a matter of course and sanctioned the Prior “because of his poverty” sending to St. Nicholas' Church a “clericus conductitius,” which means someone to take the duty.

However, Bishop Rede gave directions for a visitation of the Priory on February 9th, 1402, the result of which is not known, and at the same time on the strength of his predecessor's confirmation of the grant of the church in Midlavant succeeded in getting a substantial pension from them :—

“William Harethorn, Prior of Schulbrede, of the Order of St. Augustine, etc., greeting. Since the Parish church of Midlavant has been granted to us, with all its belongings, William Mayn, the late rector, having resigned, the Prior and Convent, in consideration of loss to the Bishop and Dean and Chapter of Chichester by that gift, agree to pay to the Bishop a yearly pension of 6s. 8d. ; and to the Dean and Chapter a pension of 2s., and to the Archdeacon of Chichester 2s.

10th April, 1402.”<sup>2</sup>

Robert Rede was a Dominican. He appears to have been

1. Cal. of Papal Registers.

2. Reg. Chic., R, f. 176d.



an uncompromising corrector of lax morals among the clergy and a rigorous suppressor of sorcery which was supposed to be prevalent at that time. He remembered the canons of Shulbrede in his will (proved in 1415) and left them 20s. A similar legacy went to Hardham and two of the nunneries, but nothing to any of the other priories in Sussex.<sup>1</sup>

In the lay subsidy levied in 1411 to 1412 it is stated "that the Prior of Sulbred has the Manor of Rawmere which is worth yearly beyond reprisals £20."<sup>2</sup> (Rawmere was the same as Midlavant). This subsidy was levied only from those in the county having in lands or rent £20 or more. The list only comprises some 120 names and no other head of a religious house is included.<sup>3</sup> Again in 1427-8 in the lay subsidy we find "In the Hundred of Bourne of half a fee in Midlavant, the subsidy thence nothing since the Prior of Shelbrede holds it and it pays tenths."<sup>4</sup> And in the same year:—<sup>5</sup>

	Taxatur ad.	subsudium.
Lynchemere.	VI mrc.	VI s. VIII d.
Lynche.	VIII mrc.	— —
Myd Levente.	—	VI s. VIII d.

The accounts of the Abbot of Dureford, who was collector of subsidy in 1515-6, showed that the Priory paid 5s. for the Church of Midlovent and 4s. 4d. for the Church of Wlenchmere "which churches belong to that Prior as is contained in the certificate of John Blounham returned to the Treasury in the fifth year and now in the King's keeping."

There was a further grant of land in Midlavant in 1520. The Prior of Shulbrede was given "the custody of two parts of a messuage and 16 acres in Midlavant which Master Robert le Coke, the bastard, who died without heirs, held on the day of his death and the custody of 6 acres of land in Midlovetta

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XXVIII, p. 56.

2. Lay Subs., 13 Henry IV.

3. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. X, p. 129.

4. Lay Subs., 6 Henry VI.

5. "Feudal Aids," 1428.

which are parcel of a certain tenement called Iremonger tenement, to be held by the Prior and his successors from Michaelmas last for a term of forty years paying therefor annually to the King for the custody of the two parts of a messuage in 16 acres 5s. 4d. for which it is answerable to the King and fourpence besides of increase and for the said six acres 3s. 6d. for which it is answerable and two shillings besides of increase."<sup>1</sup>

The grant was confirmed by a patent of the next year.

Finally by the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* the rents of the Priory in Lavant are valued at £23 10s. 0d. At the dissolution the manor passed to George Wiseman, and then to the May family who held it for many years afterwards.

This concludes the records of the connection of the Priory with Midlavant. It was a source of revenue ; but also, as is shown, at times a cause of anxiety to them.

To go back now to other accounts of taxation, we find that Edward II, when embarking on his Scotch expedition in 1310, sent to the Archbishop of York requesting "aid by way of loan with victuals." Letters were accordingly despatched to the Abbots and Priors in each county, asking for the loan of various amounts of victuals. The poor canons of Shulbrede did not escape this tax. The name occurs in the list curiously spelt thus—"The Prior of Shelebrugg."<sup>2</sup> The amount asked for was twenty quarters of wheat and twenty quarters of oats "to be paid for at Candelmas next out of moneys to be levied of the tenth or other issues of the realm." We may reasonably doubt if it was ever repaid.

There is a roll of the taxable value of the possessions of Shulbrede between 1369-85 and a roll of a subsidy collected in 1379-80, both of which are based on the taxation of Pope Nicholas already given. The former, however, gives in addition, as a spiritual possession, the Church of Wlenchmere, valued at £4 6s. 8d. In 1449-50 the Prior of Sele who was the collector of the subsidy gives a more detailed statement :—

1. Pat., 12 Henry VIII, Part 2, M. 20.

2. Claus., 3 Edward II, M. 5d.

" 8s. 8d. for this tenth of the spiritual goods of the Prior and Convent of Shulbred namely the Church of Welenchemere in the Deanery of Midhurst which is taxed at £4 6s. 8d. yearly namely 2s. of each pound and 21s. 6d. for this tenth of the temporal goods of the said Prior and Convent which are taxed at £10 15s namely 2s. of each pound."

The Chapel of Lynch which was also their property could not have been very profitable to them, as it had constantly to be excused payment of the subsidy on account of its poverty.

The increase in the cost of living in the fifteenth century together with the poverty and diminished population, had the effect of lengthening the list of religious houses and benefices exempted from taxation on the score of poverty. During the reigns of Edward V and Richard III the Priory did not pay subsidy but in 1489 and 1497<sup>2</sup> it is included in the list of those making payment. At the beginning of the sixteenth century Shulbrede was once more in pecuniary difficulties and in 1513<sup>3</sup> is expressly included no less than four times among those Pories which " by inundation of water, fire, ruin or other cause of fortune are so diminished that they are excused payment of tithes by Robert, Bishop of Chichester." But things improved again, as according to the accounts of the Abbot of Dureford, collector of subsidy in 1515-6, the Priory paid 20s. 1d. for spiritual and temporal property. The final *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (which will be given in full in the chapter dealing with the dissolution) shows that a large amount of property belonged to the house before it was abolished. These records of taxation are useful anyhow in disclosing the ups and downs of prosperity and poverty which the Priory passed through.

The advowson of the Priory itself was retained by the Percy family, although two entries in the Muniments of Magdalen College, Oxford,<sup>4</sup> suggests that a change was contemplated though not effected :—

1. Reg. Chic., D, ff. 119, 143d.

2. Reg. Chic., C, ff. 141-145.

3. Cler. Subs., 28 Henry VI.

4. Muniments of Magdalen College, MSS. 224, 225.



1459. 20 Dec. 38 Henry VI.

Grant from Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland and Lord de Ponynge, to William Waynefflete, Bishop of Winchester, of the advowson or patronage of the Priory or Church of Shylbrede.

Witness :—John Heron, Knt., Rich. Alburghe, Esq., Nich. Henry.

(Fragment of Seal of Arms.) \*

Conveyance from Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland and his feoffees (for whose names blanks are left which have not been filled up) to Bp. Waynefflete of the patronage and advowson of the Priory or Church of Shylbrede, Sussex.

Witness, the same as to the preceding deed.

(Larger fragment of same Seal).

There is not, however, any trace of Bishop Waynefflete having had further connection with the Priory. He took no steps for the annexation of Shulbrede, and except with a view to annexation the advowson would not be of any use to him. Had he conveyed the advowson to anyone else, the grant of 1459 would have been passed on to the person acquiring the advowson as part of the evidence of title, and would not be therefore among the Muniments of Magdalen College. Its presence there together with the fact that Waynefflete took no further action in the matter, may be taken to show that the grant was inoperative.

In 1261<sup>1</sup> a distinguished guest was staying at the Priory, Sir Ralph de Cameys (Camoyes), signed a document relating to the release of certain lands to Selborne Priory, and it is dated "at Schulbrede Aug. 18. 1261 die Jovis pr p.f. Assumpt. B.M." Sir Ralph de Cameys was at the time Lord of the Manor of West Tisted, a domain lying about ten miles over the Hampshire border. There is a note in 1242 of his having appointed the Sheriff of the Counties of Sussex and Surrey.<sup>2</sup> At the same date he was himself Sheriff of Surrey and returned a *compotus* of fines and payments due from the Priory of

1. Charters of Selborne Priory.

2. Patent Rolls, 26 Henry III.



THE UNDERCROFT  
OR CRYPT.



Merton.<sup>1</sup> Edward I granted to him the manor of Trotton, near Rogate, by tenure of military suit and service, but that could not have been before 1272. His family remained at Trotton for many years and it was one of his descendants, Baron Thomas Camoys, the hero of Agincourt, who married Elizabeth, the widow of Hotspur. The magnificent brass that decorates their tomb is still to be seen in Trotton Church.

Selborne Priory, to which the grant of lands was made by Sir Ralph, was also an Augustinian Priory, the nearest in the district to Shulbrede. It was founded in 1233 by Peter de la Roche, Bishop of Winchester. In 1478 a visitation of Selborne was carried out by the Priors of Breamore and Tortington under the authority of the general chapter of the Augustinian order, and a few years later, in 1484, the Priory was finally closed, and its lands made over to Magdalen College, Oxford, by Bishop Waynflete. It had fallen into a hopeless state of dilapidation, its property had been mismanaged and squandered, and it was completely deserted. "We must attribute its frequent debts and embarrassments, well endowed as it was, to the bad conduct of its members and a general inattention to the interests of the institution."<sup>2</sup> The Priory lay in a secluded part at the bottom of the valley below the village of Selborne. A steep rocky track leads to the spot through the hanging woods of oak and beech. There is absolutely no trace of the structure to-day. A few stones and fragments of building that lie about in the grounds of the farmhouse that occupies the site of the Priory are all that remain of the ancient buildings. In spite of periods of poverty and accusations of laxity the community at Shulbrede managed their affairs better than their neighbours at Selborne, and held out to the end, that is to say till they were turned out at the dissolution, leaving a very recognisable remnant of building to remind us of their existence.

Shulbrede, however, cannot have been noted for its hospitality. Though there is supposed to have been a pilgrims'

1. Hales' "Records of Merton Priory."

2. Gilbert White's "Selborne."



road to Chichester over Friday's Hill, said to have been formerly Friars Hill, the Priory was some distance off the beaten track and surrounded by woods. As Robert de Stratford, Bishop of Chichester, wrote in 1358: "The House is so far distant from habitation that magnates and other men very seldom on their travels come there for hospitality." There were no roads to speak of. Haslemere was not a place of any consequence, and the highways in Sussex seem to have been proverbially bad. King John's request to the earls, barons, knights and freeholders of Sussex, praying them "for the love of us" to assist us now in carrying our timber to Lewes "not as a right but as a favour" is the earliest testimony of the difficulties of land carriage in the Sussex weald. In Henry VIII's reign there was a popular local song that began "Souseks full of dyrt and myre." At a much later date, even in the middle of the eighteenth century, Dr. Burton wrote:—

"Roads . . . which no one would imagine to be intended for the public . . . but more truly the tracks of cattledrivers, for everywhere the usual footmarks of oxen appeared and we too who were on horseback going on zigzag almost like oxen at plough. Our horses could not keep on their legs but sliding and tumbling on their way and almost on their haunches got on slowly. Why is it that the oxen, the women and the swine and all other animals are so longlegged in Sussex? May it be from the difficulty of pulling the feet out of so much mud by the strength of the ankles that the muscles get stretched as it were and the bones lengthened.

"I saw an ancient lady—and a lady of very good quality, I assure you,"—says another writer, "drawn to church in her coach with six oxen, nor was it done in frolic or humour, but mere necessity, the way being so stiff and deep that no horses could go in it." Even to-day the roads are nothing to be proud of.

There was another visitor at the Priory in 1317, in the shape of a certain Reynold de Sancto Albano (of St. Albans), who was sent to receive "his maintenance from the Prior and Convent of Shulbrede according to the requirements of his position, on the information of brother Luke de Wodeford."

They must also have had frequent visits from the bearers of Obituary or Bead Rolls, also called 'Briefs' or 'Mortuary Rolls.' These documents asking for monastic intercession for the dead were entrusted to roll bearers or breviators who travelled round the country from one monastery to another. The object of the roll was to procure for the soul of the deceased person the prayers of the religious fraternities to whom they were presented, that it might be delivered by their intercession from the pains of Purgatory. The document consisted of a roll of parchment,<sup>1</sup> sometimes decorated and illuminated, with an account of the deceased written in a highly eulogistic style at the beginning. Each separate monastery subscribed its one entry or *Titulus* containing a statement of the order and dedication of the monastery written by one of its members. An example occurs in the Bead Roll of William Ebchester and John Burnby, Priors of Durham between 1446-1464, which was carried through Sussex from Arundel *via* Chichester, Hardham, Easebourne, Shulbrede and Dureford, to Selborne in Hampshire and Waverley in Surrey. The handwriting of the entries varies from an ill-spelt scrawl to a carefully written and very elaborately illuminated *Titulus*. In the case of Shulbrede the writing is of a superior character. The full entry is as follows :—

Titulus Ecclesiae Beatae Mariae et Sanctae Crucis de Shulbred, Ordinis Sancti Augustini, Cicestrens : Dioc. Anima Magistri Willelmi Ebchestre et anima Magistri Johannis Burnby et animae omnium fidelium defunctorum per misericordiam Dei in pace requiescant.

Vestris nostra damus pro nostris vestra rogamus.

This particular roll was taken by the 'breviator' who had charge of it to 639 monasteries, so it must have been months or even years before the Roll Bearer returned to Durham. Other rolls given in the same collection,<sup>2</sup> though taken to several of the Sussex Monasteries, appear not to have reached Shulbrede.

1. See illustrations in Gasquet's "English Monastic Life," pp. 64 and 94.

2. *Surtees Soc. Coll.*, 1856, p. 38, No. 549.

Hospitality was, as we know, a religious duty, but many houses were endowed by nobles who were inclined to abuse the gratitude of the monks, and their excesses caused complaints to reach the royal ears. Edward I forbade anyone to venture to eat or lodge in a religious house, unless the superior had formally invited him. The poor only might continue to be lodged gratuitously. "The King intendeth not that the grace of hospitality should be withdrawn from the destitute." Edward II confirmed these rules and promised that "neither he nor his family would make use of hospitality of the monks with excess." But the practice continued just the same. In fact it was the very poor or the very rich and powerful for whom the monasteries served as a hostelry. The monks received the first in charity, and the second by necessity, the inns, which were small, being too dear for the one and too miserable for the other.

To furnish hospitality for the King with all his retainers was a serious business, and Shulbrede was naturally not large enough to be called upon to do this. Henry III in 1269 therefore, on his journey from Guildford to Chichester, lodged at Dureford Abbey, about ten miles off, near Harting, a house of Premonstratensians (so called from Prémontré near Laon, in the north of France, where the order was first established by special warning from the Virgin), and again in 1324 Edward II went across from Tunbridge, *via* Petworth, to Porchester staying at Dureford. The Canons noted in their account that the cost of entertaining him was ten pounds and more which they thought a heavy burden.

Dureford Abbey, which was most beautifully situated in a fertile stretch of meadow land on the banks of the Rother, was founded by Henry Hussey in 1160. There remain only a few walls and fragments of columns and stone coffins built into the picturesque farm buildings which now cover the ground, and a fine bridge over the river. Valentine, Abbot of Dureford, negotiated an exchange of lands with John, Prior of "Wlenchmere," in 1248.<sup>1</sup> The latter granted "all

1. Cottonian MSS. Vespasian, E. XXIII, f. 107.



the land with messuages, meadows, building and other appurtenances which we have of the gift of Lord Philip de Brembre in the manor of Herting of the tenement of the brethren of St. Lasar of Jerusalem " in exchange for all the land which the Priory of Dureford held at Stanleigh of the gift of Lord Allan de St. George. Stanleigh, now Stanley, lies on the summit of the ridge close by to the west of the Priory. There is no other record of the land granted or the land received in exchange.

Although the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* shows that the Priory was receiving rents from no less than nineteen different places and was in possession of another mill in addition to the one at Coultershaw, there are no further records so far discovered concerning the gift, acquisition or transfer of land or any other form of property beyond those given above.





ENTRANCE HALL.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Early History.

**W**E may now turn from land disputes and the records of losses and acquisitions in the property of the Priory to the personal side, and try and glean from the passing references to Priors and Canons and visitations some idea, vague and incomplete though it must be, of the lives and habits of the inmates of Shulbrede.

A word at the outset on the origin and rule of the Austin Canons. St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, who, renounced the persecution of Christians to become eventually one of the four great fathers of the Latin church, had no intention of instituting a religious order. He gathered round him pious men intent on devoting themselves to religion, and within the Episcopal palace he arranged his household in such a way that he might live a life in common with these clerks and priests.

Although he died in the middle of the fifth century there is no mention of any Augustinian order existing until the ninth century, when Pope Leo III and the Emperor Lothaire incorporated by decree all the various denominations of the Christian clergy who had not entered monachism. The great community thus founded received as their rule of Discipline that which was laid down by St. Augustine in his 109th Epistle. The simple and wise precepts contained in the opening chapter are worth quoting in full :—

Before all things, dearest brethren, let God be loved ; then your neighbour, for these be the commandments that are chiefly given to us. These therefore are the precepts that we lay upon you who are established in monasteries for your observance. In the first place in as much as you are assembled together in one place, that you be of one mind in the house ; and let there be to you one mind and one heart in God. And call not anything your own but let all things be common to you and let there be distributed to each of you by him that is set over you food and raiment not equally to all, because you are not all of equal value, but rather to each of you as each shall have need ; for this you read in the Acts of the Apostles, for they had all things common and distribution was made to every man according as he had need. Let those who had any property in the world cheerfully permit when they enter a monastery that it should be common. But let not those who had nothing demand in a monastery that which they could not have had abroad. Notwithstanding, let that which they are in want of be allowed to their infirmity even though their property when they were abroad was unable to find bare necessities. Let them not however imagine themselves fortunate because they have found food and raiment such as they were unable to find abroad, nor let them stiffen their necks because they associate with those whom they did not venture to approach abroad, but let them lift up their hearts and seek not the vain things of the earth, for fear monasteries should begin to be of use to the rich and not to the poor, if the rich are humbled therein and the poor are puffed up. Again moreover let those who seem to be something in the world not disdain their brethren who came into that holy society out of poverty, but let them rather boast of the society of poor brethren than of the nobility of wealthy relations nor let them be exalted if they have contributed something out of their own possessions to the common life,



nor let them be prouder of their wealth because they share it with the monastery than if they were enjoying it in the world. For every other species of iniquity is busy about wicked deeds, that they may be perpetrated, but pride insinuates itself even into good deeds that they may come to nought. And what advantage is it to spend your goods in giving to the poor and become poor yourself when the wretched soul is made prouder by despising wealth than it had formerly been by possessing it? Live therefore all of you of one mind and at peace with one another, and honour among yourselves mutually God whose temple ye have been made.

An ideal community might be founded on precepts such as these. Unfortunately, however, most religious bodies had to be admonished by frequent injunctions (some of which I shall be able to quote) for their non-observance of the regulations set down for their guidance. The houses of the Augustinians, which at first were without bonds between them, soon tended to draw together. In 1339 Benedict XII organised the Augustinian canons on the same general lines as the one laid down for the Benedictines by a system of provincial chapters and visitations.

The order is said to have been introduced into England by Adawald, Confessor to Henry I, and the first House established was the Abbey of Colchester. As a proof of the high esteem in which Austin Canons were held it may be mentioned that at a general Chapter held at Leicester in 1513 Henry VIII, Queen Catherine, the Princess, Cardinal Wolsey, the ex-Queen of France and her husband the Duke of Suffolk were enrolled as associates of the order.<sup>1</sup> At the time of the dissolution there were 175 houses of canons and canonesses of this order in the kingdom. With the exception of the Houses of Benedictines, which were slightly more numerous, they very nearly equalled the number of all other orders put together. Only two Priors of the order were entitled to wear mitres, *viz.* the Priors of Waltham and Cirencester. Some houses were composed of as many as thirty or forty canons, but the greater number were quite small. At the dissolution, that is to say

1. Cottonian MSS. Vespasian, D. I.

at the time of its greatest decadence, Shulbrede contained twenty-three persons all told including servants, but I do not suppose that at any time there were more than five or six canons regular on the foundation in addition to the prior, novices, visitors and attendants.

The communities of Austin Canons have been described as small joint stock companies who in partnership farmed and let their land and lived a religious, regular, quiet bachelor life. Bishop Tanner says they were "a less strict sort of Religious than the monks." In the smaller houses the community consisted of a Prior, Sub-Prior, Cellarer, (who was responsible for all domestic affairs and for the catering), the Seneschal who collected the rents and held the manorial court, the canons, the novices, the servants and hinds. In the larger houses there were in addition a Precentor who had charge of the choir and the library, the Almoner, the Hosteller, who had care of the visitors, the Infirmarer, the Refectioner, etc. They had the distinctive feature of a common dormitory instead of the separate cells which were usual with other orders. Otherwise the arrangement of the buildings was approximately the same in all religious houses. The Chapel was generally on the north side of the cloister, the Frater (refectory) with the Dorter (dormitory) above it on the south side, the Chapter House on the east and the Guests' House and cellarage opposite on the west. The dress of the Canons varied in different houses. There was no rigid rule of conformity. Some wore a linen rochet and over it a black open cope; others entirely white linen or wool, others again a black cope fastened with a cross upon the breast, but the black habit was the most usual—hence the name, "Black Canons." They often wore beards, and covered their heads with a four-sided cap instead of the cowl or hood of the ordinary monk.

When they came out of the cloister and travelled, they modified their costume and became difficult to distinguish from the laity. The Council of London, in 1342, reproaches the religious with wearing clothing "fit rather for knights than for clerks," that is to say, short and very tight, with excessively wide sleeves not reaching the elbows, but hanging down very



AN AUGUSTINIAN CANON





low, lined with fur or with silk.<sup>1</sup> When William of Wykeham in 1387 visited the Augustinian canons of Selborne over the Hampshire border an injunction was issued "forbidding them foppish ornaments and the affectation of appearing like beaux with garments edged with costly furs with fringed gloves and silken girdles trimmed with gold and silver."<sup>2</sup>

Again, in the injunction addressed to Shulbrede and other priories in 1518 by Bishop Sherburne, special note is made with regard to what appears to have been grave breaches of regulations or of monastic etiquette :—

"Also inasmuch as public report has much noised it that some of the monks contrary to the holy and accustomed rule of their order wear their hose lined and tied with many laces (which however we have rather heard than believe) nevertheless lest so detestable a custom should become established (which God forbid), we order and distinctly enjoin you, my Lord Prior, entirely and continuedly to abolish all things endeavoured contrary to the rules of the order in the aforesaid matters, and henceforth not to permit them in any manner to be done."

Some idea of the lives of the canons can be gathered from the routine of the monastic day. The night office began soon after midnight. The canons were roused from their sleep either by the sacrist ringing a bell or by the Prior himself. Matins was followed immediately by Lauds, after which they retired again to rest. Seven o'clock was the hour of Prime. They rose and dressed themselves fully for the day. A *Missa Familiaris*, or early Mass, for the servants and work people followed, which the community were not obliged to attend. Before morning Mass, which was celebrated at a quarter-past eight, the *Mixtum*, or breakfast, was held in the Frater or Refectory—this was a very light meal consisting of bread and wine or beer. After Mass the great bell rang for the Chapter, where questions of discipline and management and negligences were discussed, and the common seal was, when necessary, affixed to any document or charter, and candidates for ordi-

1. Jusserand's "English Wayfaring Life."

2. White's "Antiquities of Selborne."

nation were received. On ordinary occasions the business did not occupy more than a quarter of an hour. Before High Mass, which was celebrated at ten, there was time for conversation in the cloisters. The meal of the day followed at about eleven o'clock. The canons waited in turn on each other, and during the meals the scriptures were read. Between twelve and five in winter and one and six in summer, the chief business and work of the house took place, and also recreation, which consisted of gardening, fishing, archery, playing at bowls or other games, and sometimes hunting. In the evening they came into Vespers, after which they passed through the cloisters and washed in the lavatory before going into the Frater for supper. An hour later they adjourned to the Chapter House, when the evening reading, called *collation*, took place. At seven in winter and eight in summer the tolling of the bell called the community to Compline, the last conventual act of the monastic day. This service over, and brief space having been devoted to private prayer, they all retired to the dormitory until the bell rang for Matins and proclaimed a new day of prayer and labour.<sup>1</sup>

This, if strictly adhered to, must have been a severe routine, but for the smaller houses the arrangement of the day was modified. No doubt there were periods of laxity at Shulbrede, but on the whole discipline must have been kept more or less, otherwise there would have been more severe strictures at the time of visitations.

The Canons regular of the order of St. Augustine were conventual or monastic bodies, rather than congregational or provincial like the Friars. That is to say, the members were professed to a special house, and belonged by virtue of their vows to it and not to the general body of their brethren in the country. In one point they were not so closely bound to their house as were the monks. The regular Canons were allowed in individual cases to serve the parishes that were appropriated to their houses. The monks were always obliged to employ secular vicars in these cures.

I wish one of the Canons had left us his personal experiences

1. Gasquet's "English Monastic Life."



and impressions of monastic routine, and admitted us into some of the more intimate secrets not touched by the episcopal and legal documents. But if they ever wrote anything of this sort, and it is not unlikely that they did, there is no trace of it to be found now. We must rely on such scraps of gossip and scandal and such references to censures administered, and to quarrels and disputes as can be collected from the records to give some more personal colour to the picture.

It was probably the first Prior of Shulbrede who intervened in the lawsuit already referred to between Thomas de Arderne and Evinger de Bohun in 1212. He was bold enough to stand up for the rights of his house, and interrupted the case in order to insist that part of the land under dispute had been given to the Priory by the founder, Ralph de Arderne, but he is not mentioned by name.

The first Prior named is John, Prior of W'lenchmere, together with a canon of the Priory, William de Rackington, (*i.e.* Racton), who in 1242 witnessed a charter of William de Percy, granting lands to the hospital of Sandown in Surrey, for the maintenance of six chaplains. He is the same John who, in 1248, was party to a transaction for the exchange of lands with Valentine, Abbot of Dureford.

The next Prior we hear of is Henry, in whose time the Complication as to the gift of the land in Falgham (Felpham) took place, which has already been fully described. In 1263 a complaint was made against Prior Henry by Godfrey Aguillon. The first member of the Norman family of Aguillon or de Aguila was Engenulf who fell at the Battle of Hastings. Richur his son died in 1085; Gilbert, first Lord of Pevensey, died about 1112; Richur, his son, was a benefactor of Wilmington Priory. Gilbert II, his son, died 1205 and had a brother Nicholas who was Dean and afterwards Bishop of Chichester. Gilbert III, son of Gilbert II, was founder of Michelham Priory in 1229.<sup>1</sup> He is also mentioned as Lord of Witley in 1227.<sup>2</sup> The precise relationship of Godfrey and his father to the main branch of the family cannot be traced.

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. VI, p. 130.

2. "Bygone Haslemere," p. 35.

Godfrey Aguillon stated that his father, John Aguillon (whose name occurs frequently in the Feet of Fines between 1227 and 1236), on his deathbed left 8s. rent and 100s. in money, so that his executors should place Godfrey in the Priory of Shulbrede in accordance with an agreement made with John, predecessor of the present Prior. By this agreement the Prior was to have the rent and money to keep Godfrey for seven years at school, training for Holy Orders, and then either receive him as a canon or return to him the rent and money. Godfrey complained that the Prior had neither received him nor repaid the money. Prior Henry in answer protested that Godfrey had never been handed over to his guardianship, nor had any money been paid to his predecessor. The case was settled at Guildford, but in whose favour we do not learn.

Thomas de Henton succeeded Prior Henry, and concerning him there is a little episode of some interest which as usual takes the form of a reprimand. Prior Thomas was in the habit of cutting down the woods in the neighbourhood, and continued to do this to an excessive extent. He probably thought it was a legitimate enough way of making money, and did not realise that he could be interfered with. But he acted on his own responsibility without obtaining the consent of his colleagues. Consequently he got into serious trouble, and a visitation was held in 1299, curiously enough not by the Bishop of Chichester, Gilbert de San Leofardo, whose duty it was as visitor, but by no less a person than the Archbishop of Canterbury himself. This was Archbishop Winchelsey, who is entered in the Inquisitions post-mortem in 1345 as holding land in W'lenchmere. The following is the injunction addressed by him to the Prior :—

“ Robert, etc., to our well beloved son Thomas de Henton, Prior of the Conventual Church of Shelbrede of the order of St. Augustine. On our visitation to your Priory it was clearly found that the said Priory among other things had been excessively wasteful in the consumption of its woods at the time of your administration as Prior. We strictly inhibit you from cutting trees, sticks or firewood from the woods belonging to

your church without having asked the consent of your convent and having obtained it after due deliberation, and then only for the clear need of your church, and from granting, selling, pledging or otherwise alienating your title to do so in any way under pain of greater excommunication.”<sup>1</sup>

The year after the issue of this injunction Thomas de Henton ceased to be Prior. Whether he died, resigned or was deposed is not known.

The honour of the Prior's office was now sought by a man of notoriously bad character. For the credit of the house I think it is clear that he never actually became Prior, although he certainly made every effort to obtain that dignity.

The first mention that occurs of Robert de Glottynge is at Hardham or Heringham, of which he was prior. He was a Sussex man. There is an eminence on the downs still known as Glatting Beacon, and he is sometimes called Robert de Bodeketon, which is Burton, situated close by (mentioned in Domesday as Botechitone). In 1315 it is recorded that a Gilbert de Bodeketon has “two knights' fees in Bodeketon and Glottynge,”<sup>2</sup> but no other member of the family can be discovered. The Priory of St. George of Hardham was a small Augustinian house within a mile or two of Pulborough. A very attractive farm-house stands on the spot to-day, with considerable remains of a beautiful early English Chapter House and of a vaulted cellarage in very much the same style as the cellarage that was standing at Shulbrede in the early nineteenth century. It was in 1299 that Archbishop Winchelsey on the same round of visitations which had brought him to Shulbrede when he admonished Thomas de Henton, came to Hardham and dealt very severely with Robert de Glottynge, deposing him from his office. The Archbishop wrote in the first instance from Slindon to the Bishop of Chichester in 1299:—

“When a short time since we came in person to the Priory of Heringham and there in the exercise of our right as Metro-

1. Cant. Arch. Reg., Winchelsey, f. 76b.

2. Inq. *post mortem*, 8 Edward II.



politan carried out our visitation, we found Brother Robert de Glottynge then Prior of the place under grave and well established accusation of spoliation, sacrilege, adultery and multifold incontinency, on which account and on account of many other crimes and excesses he was in our presence and according to law declared guilty, wherefore we, deposing him not without good cause from his office, have also removed him permanently from the management of the said Priory."<sup>1</sup>

The Archbishop then wrote from South Malling to the Prior of Hardham on April 28th, 1300 :—

To the Prior and Convent of Herietham concerning R., formerly their Prior.

Robert, etc., to the Prior and Convent of Heryngham salutation, etc. Whereas, for the sake of your tranquility and the proper state of your house, we hope to arrange to the best advantage for the sojourn at the Priory of Tortinton (of your order) and at your expense of Brother Robert de Bodeketon, late Prior of Heryngham, and removed by us from the charge of that Priory for certain and sufficient reasons ; we hold it necessary to ordain as follows :

By virtue of obedience and under pain of canonical punishment, we strictly forbid you (in case the said brother should wish to return to you) to admit him in any way whatever into your house or college without our special permission ; and should you do so, we shall punish you severely as transgressors of our canonical command. You must also send at once to the said brother Robert at the said Priory of Tortinton his clothes and such other things as the requirements of religion, having regard to his position, may exact and demand.

We further propose to lay down rules as to the charges for his support to be met by you during his sojourn, and we will take care to communicate the same to you by letter in due course. Farewell.<sup>2</sup>

Glottynge was accordingly ignominiously sent away.

Tortington Priory, where he was to live and to which place his clothes and belongings were to be sent, was another Augustinian House, near Arundel, of which there are practically no remains above ground at the present time. Some graceful

1. Cant. Arch. Reg., Winchelsey, f. 134 b.

2. Cant. Arch. Reg., Winchelsey, f. 277.

vaulting shafts built into the wall of a barn are all that is visible to show that a building of importance originally stood on that spot. Recent excavations have disclosed foundations extending over a very large area. This Priory, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, was a cell of the Abbey of Séez. On the suppression of the alien Priories by Henry V it was reconstituted as an independent establishment by the patron, the Earl of Arundel, and remained in existence up to the dissolution.

It was a common custom to send canons from one Priory to another of the same order by way of punishment. But Robert de Glottynes had influential friends who set to work in order to procure for him the post of Prior of Shulbrede. There is no reason to suppose that he was successful, as the documents only refer to the proposal and not (as the *Victoria History* concludes) to the accomplished fact of his election, although it is true that no other Prior is mentioned by name just at that time. The Archbishop in the following year expresses his astonishment at the suggestion in another letter to the Bishop of Chichester :—

“ It may be within the recollection of your discretion how when we were visiting your diocese you wrote to us the opinion you had formed of brother Robert, then Prior of Heringham (in favour of whose promotion to the House of Shelbrede we have just received your letter) how fully he deserved to be deposed by us from the management of the said Priory as a despoiler of the church, unworthy in other matters, useless and notorious for various crimes, how you had originally proposed his removal two years before but that you had been then restrained from action by certain persons then supporting him ; and in the visitation which we made at the said Priory of Heringham we found the said brother Robert detestably chargeable not only with spoliation but also with multifold incontinency, irregularity, perjury and other enormous excesses, by reason of which we removed him ; and whereas judging from his past life and behaviour there is very strong ground for doubt as to his subsequent conduct, he being still excommunicate and irregular, and whereas we consider it unlikely that within so short a time he should be repentent of so many enormities, and as we believe him unworthy, in accordance with the sacred canons, of any ecclesiastical dignity,

we do not see how he can possibly be said to be canonically eligible to such a dignity as is described in your letter, nor how he is fit to be received into the same by you with a clear conscience and without offence to the sacred canons, especially as we have reason to suppose from what has previously been stated that this nomination of his is due in a manner worthy of condemnation to his former supporters."<sup>1</sup>

This episode is like all the others incomplete, and we cannot be sure whether this man who seems to have perpetrated every conceivable crime came and dwelt at Shulbrede, but he was evidently a personage with influential friends. Anyhow, no more is recorded about him; and in 1320 a certain Roger was established at Shulbrede as Prior, but of him there is nothing to relate.

There were times when the monotony of monastic life became intolerable, and the canons broke away from the discipline to indulge in sports and other pastimes. One of the canons, referred to as William "le Chanoyne," went in the winter of 1334 on a poaching expedition with a number of other wild companions with the result that Richard, Earl of Arundel, formerly complained that—

"Thomas Child, Druet Fauferghe, Thomas de West Dene, Thomas le Fynch of Bunderton, Henry Waleys, Adam de Bradeham, John his son, Walter Shortfrend, Walter Crochon, Joseph atte Brugge, William le Chanoyne of Shelbrede, Henry le Provost of Bibeton and other evildoers broke his parks at Eseden, Stansted, Arundel, Downley, Dunhurst and Brunscombe by force of arms, and without leave entered in, took, an carried off deer, and inflicted other enormities on him to his grave hurt and against the King's peace."

But there is no account of any punishment having been inflicted on the culprits nor of what penance William was made to undergo by Prior Roger on his return. Perhaps the Prior winked at the proceedings, as in a very similar incident which occurred at a later date the Prior of Hardham himself broke into Arundel Park, and in this case with more serious consequences, as a keeper was wounded in the scuffle. There are

1. Cant. Arch. Reg., Winchelsey, f. 138b.



other instances of poaching by the inmates of religious houses. A canon of Calceto Priory was convicted in 1305 for hunting in Sedgewick Park and one of the Prior of Michelham's men stole a deer at Folkington in 1278.

Augustinians were evidently sportsmen, for we learn too that the canons of Selborne kept a pack of hounds for their amusement and profit. But they were severely reprimanded by Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, in 1373, who expressed his indignation with some of the canons whom he found to be professed hunters and sportsmen, keeping hounds and publicly attending hunting matches. "These pursuits," he tells them, "occasion much dissipation, bring danger both to soul and body, and lead to much expense."

A large portion of the ancient parks were for the special use of the bishops and clergy who, while they were forbidden by the canon "*de clerico venatore*" to hunt "*Cum canibus aut accipitibus voluptatis causâ*," were permitted to do so "*recreationis aut valetudinis gratiâ*"—a rather subtle distinction.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, many religious houses had their own parks and enclosures stocked with deer, and there is the example of a Bishop of Rochester in the thirteenth century which the humbler clergy may have been inclined to follow. Even at the age of four score he made hunting his sole employment, to the total neglect of the duties of his office.<sup>2</sup> Deer may still be found in the woods around Shulbrede and until a few years ago were periodically hunted with hounds. The canons must have had sport too with wild boar. Tusks of these beasts have been dug up in the garden of the Priory.

In 1354 there is an instance of some great extravagance on the part of one of the inmates of Shulbrede—probably one of the canons.

"Richard atte Hurnelond of Shelbrede acknowledges he owes to William de Hatton £100 to be levied in Surrey. Cancelled on payment."<sup>3</sup>

1. Ellis' "Parks and Forests of Sussex."

2. Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes of the people of England," 1801.

3. Claus., 27 Edward III.

A hundred pounds was a large sum in those days. And Richard paid it! He was not the Prior, however, as John is named as Prior in that year

It was in Prior John's time that the Bishop of Chichester, Robert de Stratford, sanctioned the appropriation of the church in Midlavant by the Priory in an interesting document which shows that Shulbrede was in a condition of great poverty and distress. It is dated January 5th, 1358, and must be quoted in full :—

“ Robert Bishop of Chichester, greeting, etc.

At the petition of the Priors and canons of the Priory, of the Church of the Blessed Mary of Shulbrede of the order of St. Augustine we allow the foundation of the house is not sufficient for the support of the canons. The buildings also, which by the industry and magnificence of its founder were originally sumptuously arranged, for the greater part are ruinous and placed in case of ruin and for the repair of them the rents and goods will not suffice on account of its poverty. The house is so far distant from habitation that magnates or other men very seldom on their travels come there for hospitality. Moreover the serfs and *coloni* of the Prior who were useful in carrying out their business have been taken away in the last wonderful pestilence which fell on the land of the Prior, nor can more be got, so that the land which used to be tilled by them and by the priests (by which the Prior and Canons for the greater part ought to be sustained) are made waste and useless. And the said Priory by the loss of the advowson of churches by no fault of theirs by the power of greater men whom no faculty of the Priory is enough to contradict and resist, to the inestimable loss of rent by these and other insupportable burdens exacted and collected from day to day is so depressed and weakened in its faculties by promises and the burdens imposed on the said Prior. Wherefore they humbly beg us license on this account so lately sought and obtained from the King to be delivered from poverty. We being willing to annex acquire and incorporate the parish church of Midlovent to them with the rents belonging to it for their use, struck with compassion by their manifest necessity, give, etc., etc.”



“ The wonderful pestilence ” referred to was the Black Death, the terrible scourge which came across from Eastern Europe

and devastated the whole country. It reached England in 1348 and was as disastrous in its results in Sussex as elsewhere. The monastic estates suffered in all parts as the land could



REMAINS OF CALCETO PRIORY.

with difficulty be cultivated and the harvest gathered. But this does not seem to have been the only cause of the poverty of Shulbrede.

During Prior John's tenure of office there is another instance



of the transfer of a canon from a neighbouring Priory by way of punishment. It is rather difficult to say whether it is to the credit or discredit of Shulbrede that it should have been treated as a sort of house of correction. For reasons not stated Robert Coitere, or Coytar, was deposed in or before 1355 from the office of Prior of Pynham or de Calceto (the causeway), a very small Augustinian house at Arundel, which occupied practically the actual site of the present railway station, close to which a bit of an old tower still stands. It was originally founded by Adeliza, wife of Henry I, for two or three monks who were to keep the causeway and wooden bridge across the river. Coitere was sent to do penance at Shulbrede, and Prior John reported that he was behaving well and obediently. The Earl of Arundel, however, informed the Archbishop that the deposed Prior was wandering about the neighbourhood bringing scandal upon the Order. Whereupon the Archbishop (Simon Islip) addressed a letter in the following terms to Prior John :—<sup>1</sup>

“Simon, to our brother and our beloved in Christ the Prior and Superior of the Priory of Shulbred in the diocese of Chichester greeting. Whereas when lately visiting the priory of Calceto and the brethren and canons there of the same diocese we enjoined by virtue of our Metropolitan authority on brother Robert Coytar, a regular canon of the said priory of Calceto, by reason of excesses both secret and open of which during our said visitation he stood fairly convicted before us, certain salutary penances, for the due performance of which and for other lawful reasons according to canonical and monastic institutes we commanded him to be sent to your monastery. And although ye declare by the mouth of the men that the said brother Robert is reasonably tractable and well behaved, we have been informed on the testimony of the noble lord the Earl of Arundel that the said brother Robert, disregarding our injunctions, wanders distractedly through the countryside (or through the countryside which is on every side distracted) to the hurt and scandal of his order and of religion. And although we are in a position to accuse you also of contempt and of disobedience, yet nevertheless out of our special grace we desire to pardon you this

1. Cant. Arch. Reg., Islip, f. 102.

once on condition that the said brother Robert undergoes and performs with more fervent devotion the penances aforesaid, and in order that the said brother Robert may be deprived of the opportunity of wandering at large and that he may be separated from all worldly insolence and business, we commit him to you and to whomsoever of you ye shall choose jointly and severally and we order you under pain of excommunication that ye shall with greater strictness prevent the said brother Robert week by week, by reminding him of his oath of obedience, from going outside your priory for any purpose whatsoever, further charging him that he shall spend day and night in attending the various Offices and that he shall study to observe the other injunctions which on the occasion aforesaid we laid upon him until ye shall have further orders from us. But if it shall chance that the said brother (which God forbid) shall not obey our prohibitions and admonitions duly received, then ye shall forthwith deliver him to the Archprior to be kept in custody for the benefit of his salvation and for the sake of monastic discipline. Moved by which considerations we have laid the burden of his keep there on the Priory of Calceto as ye know. Given at Saltwood the 10th Sept 1355, in the sixth year of our office.

The writer of this letter, Simon Islip, became Archbishop of Canterbury on December 20th, 1349, and died in 1366. It is not clear what offence Robert Coytar had committed. Islip the Archbishop was famous as an ecclesiastical reformer and discouraged the Flagellants who during his time swarmed into England, but he always refused to persecute. He boldly reproved Edward III for the extravagance of his court and household and assisted in enacting the Statutes of Provisors and Praemunire which were levied against the oppressions of the Popes. In 1359 he ordered special prayers for the success of Edward III French expedition,—one of the first examples of an Archbishop ordering such special supplications for use throughout the kingdom. Possibly Coytar's offence was that he paid too little heed to his monastic offices, and spent his time in the woods and fields. His stay at Shulbrede cannot have been very agreeable.

When the clerical subsidy was collected in 1381, which in the case of Shulbrede amounted to £13 18s. 4d., a complete list was given of the religious persons in the Priory at the

time. Sir William Harethorn was Prior, and the Canons were :—Sir John Lovente, Sir John Bridham, Sir Robert Nyte, James Clanefeld, John Dene and John Guldeford. It is interesting to note that William Rede, the builder of Amberley Castle, who was Bishop of Chichester at this time, left by his will a chalice to the Canons of Shulbrede.<sup>1</sup> He remembered all the Augustinian priories in his will, which was proved in 1385. But there is no record of his having visited the Priory.

Prior William was concerned in a small suit in the Godalming hundred Court in 8 Richard II on "Thursday before the Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle," 1385. William Harethorn, Prior of St. Mary Schelbrede, by pledge of John Harethorn, and Richard Monstede sued Thomas Mechenhale to recover payment of a debt; the order of the Court is that a loveday (*dies amoris*, that is, a day appointed for a meeting with a view to an amicable settlement of a dispute) is given them till the next Court. But Mechenhale does not put in an appearance at the next Court, and the officer of the Court is ordered to distrain him to appear at the next Court to answer the Prior. Mechenhale then appears and says that he has settled with the Prior and the matter drops. However, he is required to pay 2*d.*, because he had failed to settle by the date originally assigned by the Court. What the settlement was does not appear.

Sir William Harethorn remained Prior till 1404, when he resigned.

1404. Nov. 5. Resignation of Bro. W. Harethorn Prior of Shulbrede presented by Bro: Henry Hammond Canon under the sign and subscription of Mr. Symond Notary Public which the Bishop admitted in the presence of Mr. John Pedewell, Dn. John Ascheford and me J. de Blounham.<sup>2</sup>

But for three months no steps were taken to elect a successor, and there was evidently danger of some serious trouble occurring, as the Canons wrote to the Bishop of Chichester declaring "that for the last three months there has been

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XXVIII, p. 51.

2. *Sussex Record Society*, vol. VIII.



danger of a ravenous wolf breaking in on the flock by reason of the want of a shepherd, and stating that they have leave from the most noble Lord Henry, Earl of Northumberland, their patron, to chose another Prior." When the monks of St. Edmonsbury were in a similar plight, Jocelyn de Brackelond relates "we often times as was our duty besought God and the Holy Martyr St. Edmund that they would vouchsafe to us and our church a meet shepherd, thrice every week singing the seven penitential psalms prostrate in the choir after going forth from chapter."

The Shulbrede Canons managed their own election and though they did not steer clear of irregularities these were not so serious but that the Bishop's Commissaries were able to confirm the election.

The process is elaborately described in Bishop Rede's Register and the summary given by the Sussex Record Society<sup>1</sup> is worth quoting in full :—

#### PRIORY OF SCHULBREDE. O.S.A.

Confirmation of the Election of the Prior of Schulbrede.

The points of this election are as follow :—

Vacancy by reason of the resignation of William Harethorn, the last Prior. Election of Bro. John Coldell, Sub-prior, as his successor. Report hereof received by the Bishop in the Chapel of his Manor of Duryngewyk<sup>2</sup> Dec. 6th, 1404. The address of the Chapter of the Priory sets forth that as both Cathedral and Conventual establishments are wont to suffer in long vacancies, which, according to the Canons, ought not to continue beyond three months lest the ravenous wolf seize the flock deprived of their shepherd's care, the Church of the Priory of St. Mary, the Holy Cross, and St. Eustace of Shulbrede being vacant by the cession or resignation of Bro. Wm. Harethorn, the same having been tendered to the Bishop and admitted by him, they sought and obtained leave from the most serene and noble lord, Lord Henry, Earl of Northumberland,<sup>3</sup> their Patron, to choose another fit man as their Prior, and afterwards, on November 18th, the following met in

1. *Sussex Record Society*, vol. XI, p. 212.

2. Drungewick, near Wisborough Green.

3. Henry de Percy, Lord of Petworth, the father of Hotspur and Earl Marshal, was created Earl of Northumberland by Richard II, in 1377.

Chapter : John Coldell, Sub-prior, William Harethorn, James Clanefeld, Henry Hamond, and Richard Mydhurst, Priests, and Thomas Morys in minor Orders expressly professed in the Order of St. Benedict of the said Priory, some being then absent, namely, Robert Newtymbre and John Dene, who had been absent without leave from the Priory for many years past, and were supposed to have gone beyond the seas, and after diligent discussion fixed on Thursday the 19th of November, with prolongation beyond this date if needed, for the election of a Prior according to the approved custom of their Church. This Thursday having arrived, the aforesaid persons, Robert Newtymbre and John Dene excepted, met, and Mass of the Holy Spirit having been solemnly celebrated at the High Altar of the Church, they betook themselves to their Chapter-house, and being assembled in Chapter, the word of God having been set forth and the Holy Spirit's aid invoked by the chanting of the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, all secular and lay persons being excluded except Masters Thomas Southam, Rector of the Church of Dunsfold, Wynton Diocese, Adam Symound, Notary Public, Thomas March and William Hook, literates, whom they had named, taken, and chosen to witness to the truth in the whole process of this election only, and not as having any voice therein, certain monitions and protestations were made by brother James Clanefeld on behalf of all and each of those present, in words which are given at length, requiring the departure of all suspended, excommunicated, and interdicted persons, and freedom to proceed without interruption in the election. The letters of licence from the patron were then exhibited, and the constitution of a General Chapter *Quia propter* read.<sup>1</sup> Suddenly, as though by inspiration, the other brethren, with unanimous consent, named Bro. John Coldell as their Prior. (The usual formulary as to his fitness for the office follows.) They forthwith carried down and placed the elect at the Great Altar of their Church, ringing the bells and chanting *Te Deum*. The announcement of the election was then made to the Clergy and people who were present in the Church by the aforesaid brother James Clanefeld in his own and the others' names in the vulgar tongue, and the said brother, having requested Bro. John Coldell in the name of all to give his consent to his election, he reported that he had received it in these words : " In the name of God, Amen. I, brother John Coldell, Sub-prior of the Conventual Church or Priory of Schulbrede of the Order of St. Augustine, of Chichester Diocese, a priest expressly professed

1. Praty's Register (*Sussex Record Society*, vol. IV, p. 198).



in the aforesaid order in the same Priory, canonically elected Prior of the aforesaid Priory by my brethren fellow-canons of the same Priory, and being earnestly and often requested on the part of the same my brethren to consent to the same my election thus made, at length overcome by the insistence of my said brethren, unwilling further to resist the Divine will, by the Grace of Almighty God, trusting in the merits and prayers of St. Mary the Virgin, the Holy Cross, and St. Eustace our Patrons, at this twelfth hour of this 19th day of the month of November, in the year of our Lord 1404, consent in these writings as well fearfully as devoutly to the election made of myself as Prior of the same Priory."

The fraternity desire the Bishop to confirm the election, the particulars of which are formally prepared by Mr. Adam Symond, Notary Public, who states that he was present through the whole proceedings and confirmed by the affixing of their common seal. The above mentioned persons were present as witnesses, and the process is dated in the year 1404, Thirteenth Indiction, first year of Pope Innocent VIIth, on November 18th and 19th. The Bishop hereupon decreed that the competitor, if there were one, and the opponents should be cited to appear before him or his Commissaries on the day and at the place named below, and a mandate was addressed to the Dean of Mydthurst and Wm. Wylde, Chaplain of Farnhurst severally. The Chaplain certified to this effect: that he had received the mandate, quoted at length, requiring any other competitor or opponents to appear before him or Masters Robert Neel, Canon of Chichester, and John Pedewell, or either of them, on December 11th next in the Parish Church of Wysebergh to make objections or opposition, if they had any. Dated at Duryngwyke Manor "under the Seal of our Commissariate Dec. 8th, 1404." "By the authority of which mandate I William the mandatory aforesaid went publicly to the said Priory, but I found no competitors or opponents there personally, but I made a proclamation, denunciation, and citation, in the aforesaid Priory, where the said election had been celebrated, that if any wished to oppose, etc., he should appear on the said day at the place stated." . . . "In testimony whereof the official seal of the Deanery of Mydthurst is impressed on this certificate." On which day, the Commissaries aforesaid sitting on the tribunal, there appeared before them the said elect personally, and the Convent of the same Priory by James Clanefeld, their proctor. The tenor of the procuratorial letter follows. It shews that James Clanefeld and Henry Hamond were constituted proctors on the usual conditions and empowered to do all things necessary



for the confirmation by the Bishop of the Election. Given in the Chapter-house, November 1st, 1404.

The competitor and opponents in general being called at the door of the Church of Wysebergh and none appearing, the Proctor of the Convent said that he would call witnesses to the truth of the things contained in the decree of election, and produced three "informators," namely, brother Henry Hamond, Canon of the said Priory, Robert Hamond and Thomas March, literates, who were admitted, sworn, and examined, and their depositions were to be published with the consent of the aforesaid proctor. Nothing further being proposed in the aforesaid business, and the confirmation of the said election being asked by the proctor, the Commissaries, after supplying by slight alterations some defects which they had found, confirmed the said election in the form of words which follow :—

"In the name of God, Amen. The business of the election made in the Priory of Schulbrede of Brother John Coldell, elected as Prior of the same Priory, having been examined, the decree of the election and some letters and instruments having been exhibited, and witnesses in the same business having been produced, admitted, sworn, and examined, and their attestations and other proofs and evidences in the aforesaid business having been seen, inspected, and with due diligence recounted, and the whole process had in the said election having been examined, and all things which should be weighed in that respect having been weighed, we have found that all the Canons of the said Priory who had a right and voice in the said election gave their votes concordantly and unanimously for the aforesaid John the Elect, although some things respecting the solemnity of the said election, which is said to have been made by inspiration, requisite by right, through the simplicity (ignorance) of the said electors appear to have been omitted or done hurriedly and are not proved to have been observed, We, Robert Neel and John Pedewell, the specially deputed Commissaries in the same business of the reverend Father and Lord in Christ Lord Robert by the grace of God, Bishop of Chichester, supplying as far as in us lies the defects of solemnity omitted in the said election by the power committed to us in this regard, having invoked the name of Christ, confirm the aforesaid election by the authority of the reverend Father aforesaid committed to us in this regard, plenarily committing the rule and administration of the said Priory as well in spirituals as in temporals to the same Brother John.

This account of the election shows that there were at this time five canons in residence (two more being absent), a Benedictine monk, the rector of Dunsfold and three officials staying at the Priory in addition to the novices, attendants and other "secular, lay and profane persons" who were "shut out" from the ceremony.

John Dene must have left the Priory some years before. In 1385 he was admitted to the vicarage chapel of St. Thomas at Cliffe, near Lewes, and in 1390 Boniface IV conferred on him the dignity of Papal Chaplain. This same honour was also conferred on Robert Newtymbre in 1400, so they no doubt considered themselves of far too much importance to remain in the seclusion of Shulbrede. James Parsfeld, who was mentioned as acolyte in the parish church of Horsham in September, seems also to have been absent.

In the description of the election of John Coldell, the Priory is spoken of as being dedicated to "St. Mary, the Holy Cross and St. Eustache." The latter, like St. Hubert, is the patron of hunters. The legends of these two saints are confusingly alike. But St. Hubert was a Flemish Bishop and St. Eustace a Roman soldier. While hunting one day in the depth of the forest Eustace saw before him a white stag of marvellous beauty. He pursued it, but the stag fled before him. Continuing the chase he saw it climb on to a high rock, then, as he looked up, he beheld between the horns of the stag a cross of radiant light, and on it the image of the crucified Saviour. He was converted forthwith, and thus, as the chronicler has it "having set forth to take game he was himself taken by God." After many trials St. Eustace suffered martyrdom under the Emperor Hadrian, and was burnt in a brazen bull, into which his wife and children were cast with him.

The Canons' love of sport, of which I have already quoted an instance, is sufficient excuse for their having selected St. Eustace to add to the nominal patrons of their house.

Other names of Canons occur in the *ordines celebrati* at this period.<sup>1</sup> In 1405, December 18th, Thomas Morys, Canon of

1. *Sussex Record Society*, vol. VIII.

the Priory of Shulbrede was ordained as deacon on the presentation of the Prior by the Bishop of Chichester in the chapel of his manor at Duringwick; in 1413, Thomas Bagley was ordained as subdeacon; in 1416, Thomas Hole was ordained priest on presentation of the Prior of Shulbrede; Richard Putteworthe and William Langston were ordained as acolytes in the Parish Church of Storrington on March 2nd, 1408, as subdeacons in the Parish Church of Handefeld on September 20th, 1410, and as deacons on December 20th of the same year. Richard Putteworthe (or Putworth) left Shulbrede and became cellarer at Selborne where he is mentioned as being present at the election of a Prior in 1410 and was ordained as priest in Winchester Cathedral in 1411. On the Vigil of Holy Trinity, 1442, William Shorter was ordained "to the title of Shulbrede Priory" as subdeacon. In the same year he was ordained as secular deacon in the Chapel of Aldyngbourne Manor and in the following year as priest in the Palace of Chichester.

The Priors had opportunities of travelling about when they were appointed collectors of subsidy in the Archdeaconry of Chichester, as was the case in 1431 when the Prior of Shulbrede acted with the Prior of Tortington, and again in 1435 when the Prior of Shulbrede acted as sole collector.

Bishop Praty sent his commissioner, Walter Eston, in 1441 to hold a visitation. The *Progressus Visitationis* shows that the Bishop himself only came as far as Midhurst:—

"Friday, Jan. 12, 1441. He will visit in the church of Midhurst the clergy of the deanery and on the same day he will visit by his commissioners the Priors of Shulbrede and Esebourne and will sleep at Midhurst."

On a day of visitation the proceedings commenced by a sermon applicable to the circumstances. The fraternity were enjoined to make known anything that was amiss or that needed correction. Then followed a secret examination of each member of the community and their complaints, however trivial, were summed up as *comperta*. Upon these the Bishop or the commissioner issued their injunctions to the Prior and



his subjects. Eston's report was brief, but on the whole satisfactory :—

“ Nothing there was found wishing of correction except the house is burdened with old debts. It is hoped that by the industry of the Prior it will be free in a few years.<sup>1</sup>

At Easebourne Eston drew up a very unfavourable report, specially complaining of the prioress who “ frequently rides abroad and pretends that she does so on the common business of the house, although it is not so ; with a train of attendants much too large, and tarries long abroad, and she feasts sumptuously both when abroad and at home and is very choice in her dress, so much so that the fur trimmings of her mantle are worth 100 shillings.”

There is no Prior of Shulbrede mentioned again by name till 1478, when the Bishop visited the Priory on July 27th. This was Bishop Story who erected the beautiful Market Cross at Chichester. He came to arbitrate between the Prior, Sir Thomas Clune, and the brethren with regard to the custody of the common seal (unfortunately no impression of the seal is to be found anywhere). When the die, often in the shape of a single or double mould and sometimes very beautiful in design, was needed for the purpose of sealing a document, it was brought into the Chapter with the necessary wax, and the common seal was affixed to the document in the presence of the whole convent, and was then returned to its place of safe custody under lock and key. In the larger houses there were three custodians, and in the smaller Priories two, as its improper use might lead to grave irregularities. In connection with the common seal part of an injunction which was addressed to the Priory some years later might appropriately be quoted here :—

“ We will and also ordain that your common seal should be kept under three keys at the least, one of which we have determined should remain with the Prior, a second with the Sub Prior, and a third with the eldest of your fellow monks, to be kept faithfully by them ; prohibiting moreover on pain of greater excommunication anything in any manner to be

1. Reg. Chic., E, f. 80.

sealed with the said common seal unless the letter thus to be sealed shall have been previously read, inspected and also maturely understood by the greater and older part of the whole convent, and that the consent of the greater part should be given to such sealing, since from such a method many expenses may probably arise: remarking that since we are such neighbours to you you can consult with us in any difficult matters to be sealed by you for the welfare and the strengthening of the said Priory."

The Bishop on the occasion I am recounting did not limit his inquiry to this dispute:—

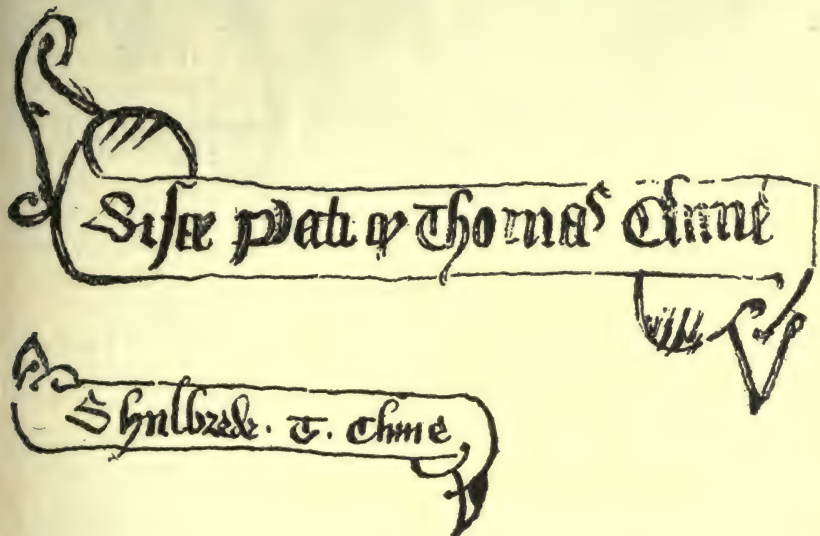
"Sir Thomas Clune the Prior made his obedience and says that the common seal is in his keeping and has been since he was made Prior. Item he says the House can expend yearly £46. Item he is making an inventory of all goods and the state of the house and has fixed the festival of the birth of the Blessed Mary as the time for it to be given in. Item they do not keep silence well. Item John Stanney has by fee as seneschal 26s. 8d. by common seal. Item Master Vyncent and his heirs by common seal 6s. 8d. Item the church belfry and chancel are very ruinous. Item the books do not agree in chant and are wanting in diverse books. Item the house is not in debt more than £4 and there is owed to the Prior and convent by diverse creditors 104s. Sir John Burrowe says that the common seal is in the Prior's keeping and they have not got a key as they are bound to have. Item they do not eat together in the refectory as they ought. Item they do not rise in the night till the 5th hour. Sir Henry Offerton says they do not keep silence. Sir John Goddard makes his obedience."

"Injunctions. First to the Prior and convent that they do not frequent taverns. Item that they keep silence. Item that the common seal be kept under two keys of which the Prior shall have one and the senior canon the other."

Sir Henry Offerton, I can imagine, was a pompous man who wanted to curry favour with the Bishop and perhaps was annoyed at the loquacity of his companions. Whether it was on account of this reprimand and prohibition from frequenting taverns or other weightier cares cannot be said, but Prior Thomas evidently became depressed in spirits. *Disce pati* he wrote on the pages of a manuscript book. This book, which is

now in the library of King's College, Cambridge, is a manuscript entitled *St. Ambrosiæ Quædam*, and bears the signature of *Thomas Clune Prioratus de Shulbrede*. Twice over this motto occurs written in a scroll *disce Pati qd.* (quoth) *Thomas Clune*, and again *disce pati Shulbrede T. Clune*.

How long Thomas Clune remained Prior we do not learn. In the troublous times during the reigns of Edward V and

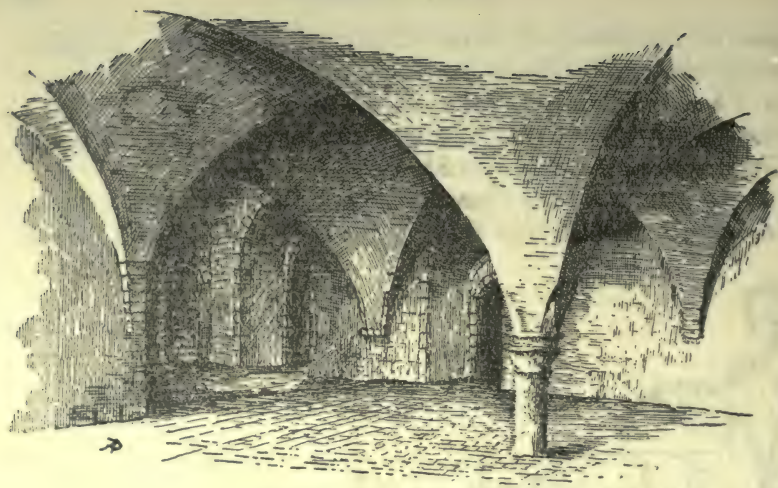


Richard III there is a silence so far as Shulbrede is concerned. At the end of this century the ordination of several of the Canons is entered in the episcopal registers: Richard Burgeys and Henry Chambyr as Sub Deacons at Aldingbourne on March 16th, 1493. Richard Burgeys as Deacon at Aldingbourne on May 24th and December 20th, 1494. Richard Rooke as acolyte at the same place on March 31st, 1498, and Henry Chamber as priest in the Palace of Chichester on the vigil of Easter in the same year.<sup>1</sup>

The momentous events of the sixteenth century must be reserved for subsequent chapters.

1. Reg. Chic., D.





CRYPT AND HALL (1902).

## CHAPTER V.

### The Last Four Priors.

SIR NICHOLAS FFENSHAM was Prior at the beginning of the sixteenth century. By this time some of my less knowing readers may have been led to suppose that a series of baronets or knights were chosen as Priors and Canons of Shulbrede, so it had better be explained that this was not the case. "Sir" (a translation of *Dominus*) preceding the Christian name was a not unusual appellation for a priest, being a degree more respectful than plain Master. It will be remembered that in "Love's Labour's Lost" the curate is called "Sir Nathaniel."

An elaborate injunction was addressed by Bishop Sherburn to Shulbrede Priory in 1518<sup>1</sup> as well as to the Priories of Boxgrove, Tortington, Hardham, Michelham, and Hastings, all

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. IX, p. 61.

Augustinian houses except Boxgrove, a large Benedictine Abbey, the fine chapel of which is still standing as the parish church in a small village a few miles from Chichester. Dealing as it does in a very comprehensive way with the whole conduct of a religious house, this injunction is most instructive.

The document (written in Latin) begins by laying down specific regulations with regard to punctual keeping of hours, the manner of walking to services two by two and the appointment of a canon "the one most ripe and most perfect" to instruct the novices that they might "know by heart the Psalter of David and other things which belong to the canonical hours, and attend to observances and ceremonies of religion, and have their countenances as they walk cast down to the earth or reverently raised to a crucifix; that they should also all sing at the same time, lowly, devoutly, and methodically blessing God with one voice" and be clad with propriety and decency.

The observance of silence for all members of the community is insisted on, an injunction required as we know as much at Shulbrede as elsewhere, and employment was to be arranged for them out of doors "lest the devil should find them idle; and that they should have gardens in which to labour with bodily exercise and to refresh themselves, provided always that the gardens planted with trees should be made pure from briars, nettles, clods, mounds, and other uncleanness the refuse of the place, and should be brought into order and an agreeable pleasantness of recreation, and when so brought should always be kept in order by the cloistered brethren themselves." Very good maxims for all gardeners. The canons were further enjoined not to wander outside the enclosure "without just and reasonable cause" and then only in the company of a fellow canon; to abstain from "feasting together and other gluttonies and from vain talkings together," and to keep the various apartments clean and in good order and with the consent of the Prior offer hospitality to strangers. The regulation as to the custody of the common seal has already been quoted and also the reprimand objecting to the fanciful fashions they followed with regard to their attire.

Accounts were to be carefully kept "in a parchment book for the memory of future persons" and an inventory of all property to be drawn up annually. The Prior was not to employ useless servants, but "only those necessary in the offices or cultivating the fields"; and the canons were ordered "to nourish no dogs, birds or hawks, but that if any fragments remained they should be given to the poor." One Prior—I doubt that it was Ffensham—was reprimanded for his love of archery: "Also because you my Lord Prior are noted for an archer even outside the Priory with laymen, and because you wear out the time which ought to be your leisure for contemplation and wholesome reading in vain forbidden sports and unlawful matches, we enjoin you under penalty that neither you nor your fellow brethren contend in arrow shooting in any way beyond the boundaries of the Priory, so that if for the sake of recreation that sport please you, it may be carried on secretly within the enclosure of the Priory."

Archery was encouraged amongst the people in general. At the end of the fifteenth century the King commanded every Englishman to have a long bow of his own height and that butts should be made in every township at which the inhabitants were to shoot up and down upon all feast days under the penalty of one half-penny for any time they omitted to perform the exercise. It was therefore not surprising that the canons took up the practice as well. Strict regulations were laid down in the injunction as to the employment of women "to wash linen suitably, to milk cows, churn butter and make cheeses so that they should have no opportunity of entering in the kitchen, hall, pantry or other interior places of the said Priory." At Tortington Priory it was recorded that "Faith Lucas has the office called Day and makes cheese and butter and comes to the house sometimes; she is, however, believed to be of good conversation." Playing with dice or cards and hunting was prohibited as well as "drinkings, or gossippings or gaming in the church or cemetery." The state of discipline in some of the houses must have been at a low level for such a reproof as this to be necessary. The document ends with a general warning:—



"Also because it is ascertained that the honour of the order, its rules constitution ceremonies and other observances, have long passed away into disuse among you not without your great peril, my Lord Prior we enjoin you, by the hand of obedience diligently and effectually to watch in the premises (*i.e.* in the aforesaid matters) and perhaps in other matters tending to the glory of your order; and before the feast of the Nativity of Our Lord to execute them with effect, so that in reward for your burden you may be esteemed as a good shepherd in the sharp and terrible day of judgment. Also we ordain that these injunctions shall be written in some large book to remain in the Chapter House and that they be read once a month in chapter also in the vulgar tongue if needful and that diligent inquiry be made as to keeping the matters before mentioned so that a reform should be made in things not observed lest the memory of them perish with their sound."

Sir Nicholas Ffensham resigned in 1519 and was succeeded as Prior by John Yonge, Bishop of Callipoli, who was collated to the Priory on June 12th by Bishop Sherburn, the Archdeacon of Chichester being directed to instal him. To have as Prior a Bishop (even of Callipoli) must have been an unusual excitement for the inmates of Shulbrede: it shows also that the house must have had a certain reputation to have been considered a worthy residence for such a high dignitary of the church. His duties in London and elsewhere prevented him from exercising anything more than a nominal rule over the house during the two years he held the office of Prior, and I daresay the little, easy-going community preferred his absence.

John Yonge<sup>1</sup> was born at Newton Longville in Buckinghamshire in 1463, was educated at Winchester, and obtained a scholarship and afterwards a fellowship at New College, Oxford. For a time he was Rector of Allhallow's Church, Honey Lane, in London and was appointed in 1510 warden of the Hospital of St. Thomas of Acon in the Cheap. The Bishop of London appointed him as his Suffragan, and he was consecrated in 1513 under the title of Bishop of Callipoli in Thrace, making his profession of obedience to the Archbishop

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XLVII, p. 20.

of Heraclius, his titular superior. This appointment was due to his friendship with Cardinal Wolsey; he also became Archdeacon of London. In the Bishop of London's register for 1519, among the *Ordines Celebrati*, it is stated on June 18th "offices were not celebrated either by Richard, Bishop of London, because he was blind, or by John Bishop of Callipoli because he was absent as they say in Sussex,"—owing to the fact that he was being installed as Prior of Shulbrede. He continued to act frequently as Suffragan, which shows he was not content to remain out of the world in the seclusion of his Sussex Priory. When he resigned in March, 1521, he became warden of New College, Oxford. He had several other livings, and was in addition Dean of Chichester. Yonge was buried in New College Chapel, where a fine brass in the ante-chapel represents him in the habit of a Bishop. The date of his death was March 28th, 1526, but this is not engraved on the brass which was erected in his lifetime, his executors having omitted to fill the blank space. The mitred head was cut out of the metal by the Puritans probably in the time of Oliver Cromwell.

During the two years he was Prior a grant of land in Mid-lavant by a patent of Henry VIII was made to "John, Bishop of Callipoli, Prior of the Priory of the Blessed Mary and St. Eustache of Shulbrede." But he is not connected with any other episode in Shulbredian history, and his whole career serves to show that he was a man of very different position from his predecessors and successors. He may have been more eminent, but I do not regard this episcopal pluralist with the same interest as men like Harethorn, Coldell, Clune or Ffensham, who spent a great part of their lives in this peaceful retreat.

When John Yonge resigned a canon from Tortington was elected in his place. The confirmation of the election runs<sup>1</sup>:—

"On 21 March, 1521, the election by Shulbrede of William Burrey, a regular canon of the Order of St. Augustine belonging to the Priory of Tortington, as Prior, was laid before



BISHOP YONGE'S BRASS





the Bishop by John Stilman, notary public, sealed with the common seal.

William Lawley presiding in his chapter house of the Priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Holy Cross and St. Eustache of Shulbrede to the Bishop—since the Priorship is vacant by the free resignation of John Yonge Bishop of Callipoli late Prior we sought of our noble patron Henry Earl of Northumberland, founder of the Priory to chose us a Prior we wrote thus : We, William Lawley president, Henry Selwode, John Stanney, Nicholas Dunke, Lawrence Gold and Lawrence Boys canons and brothers of the said Priory on March 4, 1521, etc.”

The document goes on to say that William Burrey was elected and the confirmation was signed by the Bishop on March 31st, 1522.

By command of the Bishop, John Northial (who was in later years chaplain of St. Mary's Hospital in Chichester) carried out a visitation on July 6th, 1524<sup>1</sup> :—

“ The Commissioner having read his commission, Sir William Burrey, Prior, of the said House stood up and certified that he had cited all and singular of his brethren to comply according to the tenour of the mandate. Sir William Burrey, Prior of the said house, answered in person, so did Sir Nicholas Dunke, regular canon and clerarius ” (cellerarius, cellarer : *i.e.* general caterer, equivalent to the post of bursar in a college) “ and Sir John Henton and Lawrence Boys regular canons. Sir William Lawley, canon regular, did not answer, Sir Henry Selwode was absent, Sir John Stanney did not answer.”

The Commissioner then proceeded to examine them and find out matters requiring reform :—

“ Sir William Burrey, Prior, Sir Nicholas Dunke, Sir John Henton and Sir Lawrence Boys being interrogated said ‘ All well.’ The commissioner, when his examination had been finished, commanded the Prior to show a faithful account of his administrations there together with a statement of the goods and ornaments of the said Priory, before him at the feast of St. Andrews next.”

Three years later John Northial came again in the summer ;

1. Reg. Chic., A, f. 93.

the same canons were present but this time they had complaints to make against Sir William Burrey. Sir John Stanney, however, took his part and when interrogated answered with the Prior "All well." The other three expressed their disapproval thus: "All well except that the Prior is too remiss in paying the stipends of the canons and too sparing in giving them victuals" (*quod dictus Prior est nimis remissus in solvendo stipendia et nimis parcens in cibariis*).<sup>1</sup> The Prior was therefore warned and directed "to honestly provide the canons with good and healthy food for each of their meals according to the exigency of the times and feasts." The Chancellor also commanded the Prior and brethren to eat together in future at breakfast and dinner unless they be prevented by infirmity.<sup>1</sup>

The one whose infirmity is probably referred to here must have been Sir John Stanney, an old canon who is first mentioned as a member of the community acting as Seneschal in 1478 when Sir Thomas Clune was Prior. The duties of the Seneschal were to keep the accounts of the rental, to hold the Manorial Court and to look after the guests. He was one of the commissioners for the collection of subsidy in 1512-14-15 and he lived under the rule of five Priors without ever having aspired to that high position himself. He was evidently of a peaceful and uncomplaining disposition for at the visitation of 1524 he made no reply to the Commissioner's questions and in 1527 though the other canons complained he said all was well. John Stanney must have been well over seventy years of age and was among the last inmates at the time of the suppression.

There is certainly nothing in these last two visitations that would lead one to suppose that there was anything gravely amiss at Shulbrede, and yet a letter of 1535 states that "the Bishop deposed the Prior and proposed to have suppressed the house some ten years since." This partial suppression (if it really took place) cannot have been before 1527. "George Prior of Shelbrede personaliter" appears in the list of persons

1. Reg. Chic., A, f. 99d, 102.



summoned to the Convocation of Canterbury in 1530, but William Burrey is again Prior in 1532. He may have been temporarily deposed and reinstated again, and "George" may have been George Waldern who eventually succeeded him. In spite of the action of the Bishop, the house continued to exist, though sadly impoverished. Foreseeing trouble, Sir William Burrey made an attempt to propitiate Thomas Cromwell by granting him "a pension" (which amounted to giving him a bribe) on the understanding that the house should be left in security and tranquility. This arrangement was made through Master Richard Bedon, one of Cromwell's minions who went about collecting bribes for him. Bedon is mentioned as deputy of William, Earl of Southampton, in 1541.<sup>1</sup> The two letters, which form the correspondence, are very interesting and at the same time pathetic, the first from the cringing and subservient Bedon to his master, the other from the foolishly trusting and troubled Prior William :—

"Master Cromwell, in my right heartily wise I commend me unto you. Sir Giles Covertt<sup>2</sup> and I did move you of a house in Sussex called Shulbrede which is of canons. Sir, since that I spake with you I did send my servant unto the Prior and informed him by my letter what offer and promise I did make you in Westminster Hall. Sir, the Prior is really well contented to perform my promise so that you will be so good master unto him that they may be kept out of the book and dwell at rest without trouble and continue still in their house and that you will make Master Heneage with you in this matter and this done you shall have every of you XXs. by the year by patent during your life. Sir, make your patent and send them to me by this bearer and I will surely get them sealed and send them to you again. Sir, I pray you let Master Heneage know that this motion cometh of me for I trust that he will be the better master unto me. Sir, I do occupy a stewardship of the Bishop of Sarum under him. Sir, if that you do obtain this purpose for this poor house I doubt not that I shall get you a patent or two more in these parts and then I trust that you and I shall be better acquainted. Sir, I pray you that I may have some answer in writing from you

1. Land Revenue Misc. Books, Edward VI, vol. 190.

2. Tenant of Imbhams in Haslemere, in 1548 (*ibid.*).

by this bearer that I may show it to the Prior and Convent to comfort them withal for do assure you they are in great fear and trouble as Jesu knoweth who ever preserve you—scribbled lazily (scurybeled laysorles) at Godalming the Thursday next after St. Valentine by your assured to his little poor Richard Bedon.

“Sir, the House is of my Lord of Northumberland’s foundation and if he can do any good therein I think my Lord Percy will help you the best he can. It is not above £24 land and keepeth 7 canons and keepeth the house and serveth God barely well. I pray you send me Master Heneage patent and your—

To his right well beloved Mr. Cromwell.”<sup>1</sup>

In this letter and the following I have not attempted to copy the original spelling which is often puzzling and prevents the letter being easily read. Sir William Burrey then wrote :—

“Master Bedon, we greet you well thanking you of your great kindness certifying you we are all content to the tenour of your letter if so be that we may have a true certificate that we be in no more trouble and doubt of house, goods, lands : this done let them make their writing reasonably after due conscience and it shall be sealed. Sir we desire you as heartily as we can all that you will do for us in this trouble as we shall hereafter for you and we shall pray for you in special unto Almighty God and that we may be able to fulfill our promise this done you bind us no more to you at this time but Jesu preserve you.

By your poor oritories W. Prior  
and the brethren of Shulbrede.

To Master Bedon at Shakelforde.”<sup>2</sup>

The formal grant of the pension is noted among the Cromwell papers :—

“We, William Burrey Prior of the house or Prior of Shulbredd and the convent of that place have given by this our deed confirmed to Thomas Cromwell gentleman an annuity or annual payment of 26s. 8d. to be had by him or his assigns to the end of his life.”

Cromwell procured a similar annuity from Hardham Priory.

Before I come nearer to the closing scenes I must give a letter which concerns nothing more important than a little

1. Letters and Papers, Henry VIII, vol. V, p. 106.

2. Letters and Papers, Henry VIII, vol. V, p. 107.

dog. In spite of the special injunction that the canons were "to nourish no dogs," it appears that Sir William Burrey had a "black brache," a sporting dog, which Lady Lisle wanted, though the Prior seems to have been reluctant to part with it:—

"Your bedman William Waytte  
to Lady Lisle my singular good lady.

Good madam I was so bold as to write to the Prior of Shelbred for a little black brache in your Ladyship's name and my Lord's both the which was not delivered on my first bill. But I was so bold over my Lord and your Ladyship to cause Rauffe Reggisby your servant on my said good Lord's name and yours to carry another letter to the said Prior and he had conveyed the said brache to Master Dawtre the which was very loth to part with her. I shall desire your ladyship to be so good lady unto me as let my Lord to have some knowledge of these my bold letters in his name lest my Lord should take any displeasure herein the which I should be very sorry to hear of.

Wymering, March 3, 1534."<sup>1</sup>

William Burrey resigned in 1533, and retired to his own Priory of Tortington, which he left in 1521 to come to Shulbrede. His term of office had been marked by disagreeable incidents; he anticipated probably the eventual calamity that would befall the house, and was glad to fall back to a post of less responsibility. He is mentioned in a letter written by Sir William Goring to Cromwell on June 26th, 1536:—

"I received your letter that I should resort to the Priory of Tortington - - - I have sent unto you a bill of the Prior's hand the which he sent to Sir William Bery dwelling at Tortington and late Prior of Schulbred on June 21 one day before I received your letter. It was copied out of a book of one Mayys of Southwark, Grocer, the prior's brother. Harry Rynghede one of the canons, told me that when the prior was in court, by means of my cousin Palmer, he wrote to the said Harry to burn all such letters as his brother May had written to him which he did."

Sir William sent with this letter "a copy of the book which the Prior did read as a prophecy." William Burrey must have

1. Letters and Papers, vol. VII, p. 283.



found that there was trouble at Tortington as well as at Shulbrede.<sup>1</sup>

He was succeeded by George Waldern, the last Prior of St. Mary, St. Eustace and the Holy Cross of Shulbrede. The Walden or Waldern family came from Walden, near Pevensy. After the dissolution George Waldern became rector of St. Peter's, Lynchmere. He appears as a legatee under the will of Rycherde Bettsworth<sup>2</sup> in 1540 and also as a witness, his name being given thus: "George Waldern, curat." He may have stayed on in the Priory for a time but it is not likely that he was allowed to remain there. It would certainly have been melancholy for him to inhabit all alone the large building rapidly falling into ruins, out of which his brethren had been expelled. No doubt he strolled down the hill from time to time to visit familiar haunts, reflecting sadly on the fate of the old foundation.

LIST OF PRIORS  
OF THE PRIORY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, ST. EUSTACE  
AND THE HOLY CROSS OF SHULBREDE.

	<i>Mentioned in</i>
A Prior unnamed . . . . .	1212
John . . . . .	1242
Henry . . . . .	1255
Thomas de Henton . . . . .	1299
Roger . . . . .	1320
John . . . . .	1354
William Harethorn . . . . .	1380 Resigned 1404
John Coldell . . . . .	1404
A Prior unnamed . . . . .	1431 and 1441
Thomas Clune . . . . .	1478
Nicholas Ffensham . . . . .	Resigned 1519
Bishop John Yonge . . . . .	1519-1521
William Burrey . . . . .	1521-1533
George Waldern . . . . .	1533-1537

1. Letters and Papers, vol. X, p. 207.

2. See p. 172.

# The Last Four Priors

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## CANONS OF SHULBREDE PRIORY OF WHOM MENTION IS MADE IN THE RECORDS.

	<i>Mentioned in</i>
William de Rackington . . . . .	1242
Robert de Glottynes (?) . . . . .	1300
William " le Chanoyne " . . . . .	1334
Richard atte Hurneland . . . . .	1354
Robert Coitere (or Coytar) . . . . .	1355
John Lovente . . . . .	1381
John Bridham . . . . .	1381
Robert Nyte . . . . .	1381
James Clanefeld . . . . .	1381
John Dene . . . . .	1381
John Guldeford . . . . .	1381
Robert Newtymber . . . . .	1381
Henry Hammond . . . . .	1404
Richard Mydhurst . . . . .	1404
James Paresfeld . . . . .	1404
Thomas Morys . . . . .	1405
Richard Putteworthe . . . . .	1408
William Langston . . . . .	1408
Thomas Bagley . . . . .	1413
Thomas Hole . . . . .	1416
William Shorter . . . . .	1442
John Burrowe . . . . .	1478
Henry Offerton . . . . .	1478
John Goddard . . . . .	1478
Richard Burgeys . . . . .	1493
Henry Chambyr . . . . .	1493
Richard Rooke . . . . .	1498
William Lawley . . . . .	1524
Henry Selwode . . . . .	1524
John Stanney . . . . .	1478-1534
Nicholas Dunke . . . . .	1524-1534
Lawrence Gold . . . . .	1524
Lawrence Boys . . . . .	1524
John Henton . . . . .	1524



THE PRIOR'S CHAMBER.

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Dissolution.

**W**HATEVER may be the general opinion as to the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, and I do not propose to embark on a discussion of the merits and demerits of the policy, there can be no manner of doubt that the summary way in which it was carried out was in the majority of cases grossly unjust. No fair-minded persons, however enthusiastic they may be about the Reformation, can allow their enthusiasm to go the length of admiration for the methods and reputation of the King's Commissioners. To begin with, the character of these Commissioners was in itself enough to discredit the whole proceeding, and if the intention was to suppress at all costs the lesser monasteries, the series of hurried visitations in which charges of simony and of foul and revolting crimes were sometimes made against quite inoffensive communities was not only



unseemly but unnecessary. In some cases there was no doubt ample justification for severe censure for irregularities and moral laxity, but if the Commissioners are closely followed on their journeys, it will be noticed even by their own letters that there was no discrimination whatsoever in their dealings, and the exaggeration of offences in nearly every case that came before them was merely a sign of their zeal and determination to carry out and justify their master's orders.

Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the King's Viceregent for ecclesiastical affairs, himself an adventurer of a very low type, appointed as Chief Commissioners Layton, Ap Rice, Legh and London. Their *comperta* or reports formed a Black Book which was laid before Parliament on their return.

It was Richard Layton "a profesour in the lawes and the chiefest" who came to Sussex. He was the most obsequious and subservient of them, though perhaps not the most dissolute. His numerous letters are very graphic and full of detail. He seems to gloat over obscenities, and with coarse humour introduces them whenever possible. Of humble origin, he was one of a family of thirty-two. While Layton was in Wolsey's service Thomas Cromwell noted him as "a dexterous and diligent man" and commissioned him to undertake the visitation of the University of Oxford. At various times he held the sinecure rectory of Stepney, the living of St. Faith's and of Harrow-on-the-Hill, where he amused himself with hawking, and growing pears, and was able to offer Thomas Cromwell a dozen beds in his parsonage. He was also Dean of Chester-le-Street and Archdeacon of Buckingham; he assisted at the trial of Anne Boleyn, and finally in 1539 became Dean of York. In 1543 he was appointed to succeed Paget as British Ambassador in Paris, but was transferred to Brussels where he died in June, 1544, of "the worst kynde of dropsey." After his death it was found he had pawned plate belonging to the Chapter of York. During the northern visitation the rector of Kirkby Ravensworth alleged he was in danger of death from the hands of the populace for entertaining Layton and Legh.<sup>1</sup>

1. Dict. of Nat. Biog.

Layton in his eagerness before setting out says "No one of what degree soever he be shall do the King's Highness so good service in this matter for those parts doing all things so diligently for your purpose and discharge." He seems to have had a great antipathy against Augustinians. "Specially the black sort of devilish monks," he writes, "I am sorry to know as I do, sure I think they be past amendment and God hath utterly withdrawn His grace from them."<sup>1</sup> He had many and varied adventures on his rounds, which he appears to have enjoyed. His account of his visit to Langden Abbey in Kent is worth quoting as a good instance of his methods and also of his epistolary style.

"I myself went alone to the Abbot's lodgings joining upon the fields and woods even like a cony clapper full of starting holes. I was a good space knocking at the Abbot's door—*nec vox nec sensus apparuit* saving the Abbot's little dog that within his door fast locked bayed and barked. I found a short poleaxe standing behind the door and with it I dashed the Abbot's door in pieces *ictu oculi* and set one of my men to keep that door: and about the house I go with that poleaxe in my hand *ne forte* for the Abbot is a dangerous and desperate knave and hardy. . . . In this sudden doing extempore to circumsept the house and to search yon servant John Antony's men marvelled what fellow I was and so did the rest of the Abbey for I was unknown there of all men."

Layton revelled in scandals whether they were real or imaginary and entered in his notes all the gossip he could collect. "Yesterday I learned many enormous things against the Bishop" is a characteristic beginning of one of his letters.

Layton entered Sussex at Durford in the autumn of 1535. The visit he had just paid to the Cistercian Abbey of Waverley was not calculated to put him in a good humour, as the following extract shows:—

"I have licensed this bringer the Abbot of Waverley to repair unto you for liberty to repair his husbandry whereupon consisteth the wealth of his monastery. The man is honest

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, VII, 227.



**THOMAS CROMWELL**

(From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery.)





but none of the children of Solomon. Every monk within his house is his fellow and every servant his master. Mr. Treasurer and other more gentlemen have put servants unto him whom the poor man dare neither command or displease. Yesterday early in the morning sitting in my chamber in examination I could neither get bread, drink nor fire of these knaves till I was fretished, and the Abbot durst not speak to them. I called them all before me and forgot their names and took from every man his keys of his office and made new offices for my time here, perchance as stark knaves as the others. It shall be expedient for you to give him a lesson and tell the poor fool what he should do amongst the monks."<sup>1</sup>

His next letter written from Durford Abbey on September 26th shows in what spirit he intended to deal with the poor brethren of Shulbrede :—

" On Friday at night I came into Sussex to an Abbey called Durford—it might better be called Dirtyford—the poorest Abbey that I have seen as this bearer the Abbot thereof can tell, far in debt and great decay. . . . A Priory of Nuns and another of Canons nigh together lay towards Chichester, being of their poverty unable to lodge us, we were compelled to ride out of our way to an Abbey of Cistercians called Waverley and there lodge on Saturday at night, and betwixt that and Chichester lay the two poor priories. In one of them is iii canons and the other iii nuns which we will dispatch on Monday by the way and so on to Chichester Cathedral."<sup>2</sup>

The house of Canons referred to was Shulbrede, and the Priory of Nuns was Easebourne Priory near Midhurst, of which the Lady Margaret Sackville was Prioress, and about which serious scandals had come to light.

On October 1st he wrote from Boxgrove Priory, and on Monday, October 4th, he came over to Shulbrede. As Commissioner he was accompanied by a considerable retinue, an auditor (perhaps the Mr. Treasurer referred to in the letter from Waverley) the particular receiver appointed for the county, and a clerk besides " three other discreet persons to

1. State Papers, 1535.

2. State Papers, 1535.

be named by the King in every county," not to mention the servants with baggage and books.

We can imagine the feelings of the little community when they first saw the procession approaching through the woods on that autumn morning. Rumour had no doubt reached them of the Commissioner's doings in other parts of the county and they lived in dread as to when their turn should come. This was to be the end. Their doom was sealed, there was no escape; they simply had to wait for the fatal day. On the Monday morning the peace of the valley was disturbed by the clamour of the approaching company who came for the sole purpose of turning them out of their home and taking their goods from them. Layton can be pictured, a coarse, overbearing man, swearing and jesting as he rode along at the head of his troop, probably out of temper at the remote position of the Priory which necessitated his coming over rough tracks through the woods. He was received at the gate by the Prior George Waldern, supported by John Stanney, Nicholas Dunke and other inmates of the house. Having dismounted, the visitors adjourned to the Chapter House. The Prior was summoned and shown the act of dissolution and their special commission, a brief interrogation and examination was held and an inventory drawn up. While this was done, Layton sat down and wrote there and then his report to Cromwell before continuing on his journey. Both his letter and two inventories can fortunately be reproduced in full. The letter, which I have examined in the Public Record Office, has been worn away on one side. I give the original version and also a version in modern spelling filling in conjecturally the missing words :—

" Hit may please your mastershippe to underst . . .  
 the prior of Shelbrede this bringer to com unt . . .  
 religiouse man. he hath for himself but VII . . .  
 two others V a peisse the fyfft and laste IIII . . .  
 yet he is made over mydsummer mone . . .  
 as many of his fellowse if his right myn . . .  
 hym, The Bisshope of Chichester put out all . . .  
 about Xyere sens and deposede the prior . . .  
 purposed to have suppressedd the howse f . . .



howse iiij hundredth shepe LXoxen V . . .  
 swyne he hade the barns full of corne . . .  
 he made his suppression. he puled down . . .  
 made wt piles of marbull. he pully . . .  
 fratre much of the churche he con . . .  
 Upon the howses the leyde under the . . .  
 pypes all the payment of the fratr . . .  
 their chalesses wt all the howshold s . . .  
 bare walls and kepede the lande thus  
 and towke fro them a goodly In in the . . .  
 them of XL shelyngs goode rent wiche . . .  
 Erle of Northumberland caused hy to put . . .  
 he was founder and now the Kyng ys for . . .  
 and joineth to the manr of petworth h . . .  
 Lorde the Kyng me thynketh were be . . .  
 beyng almost down and yo hit d . . .  
 for they be all as ye se bawdy knav . . .  
 the bisshope of Chichester fere ye in . . .  
 of hys whereunto he hade no such . . .  
 willyng be somewhat plaine wt . . .  
 spoile and robry if I may know your pl . . .  
 the premises this bringer the bawdy prior . . .  
 from Shelebrode prior this monday by your s . . .

“ It may please your mastership to underst(and that I have told) the Prior of Shelbrede this bringer to come unto (you he being) a religious man . . . . The Bishop of Chichester put out all (the canons) about ten years since and deposed the Prior (and) purposed to have suppressed the house f(or) (?) . . . (He took from) the house four hundred sheep sixty oxen five . . . swine: he had the barns full of corn (when) he made his suppression. He pulled down (the chapter house) made with pillars of marble he pulled (down with the) fratre much of the church. He con(verted to his own use the tiles) upon the houses the lead under the (eaves and) pipes. All the pavement of the fratr(e and) their chalices with all the household (stuff, leaving only) bare walls and kepted the land thus (to himself) and took from them a goodly Inn in the (village giving) them 40s. good rent which (the) Earl of Northumberland caused him to put (back because) he was founder and now the King is for . . . and joineth to the Manor of Petworth . . . (My) Lord the King me thinketh were be(tter to destroy it) being almost down and join it (to his own demesne) for they be all as ye see bawdy knaves. (Let) the Bishop of Chichester fear ye (will make him repay some) of his whereunto he had no such (right, I am) willing

to be somewhat plain with (the Bishop about his) spoil and robbery. If I may know your pl(easure in) the premises this bringer the bawdy Prior (can bring the same back). From Shelbrede Priory this Monday by your s(ervant)."<sup>1</sup>

The document has two endorsements; the one runs "To the right honourable Mr. Thomas Cromwell, Chief Secretary to the King's highness at Winchester, with speed." The other is a docket summarising the charges he brings against the canons with his usual coarseness and judging by his general method I would also say inaccuracy.<sup>2</sup>

"Doctor Layton declaring the Bshp of Chichester had suppressed the Priory of Shulbred for the wyckedness of the monks.

The Prior hath	VII	} HORES."
The Subprior	VII	
One . . .	V	
One other .	V	
One other .	II	

Chuckling to himself as he folded the document and scribbled in capital letters the docket on the outside, Richard Layton, his work finished, called for his horses and proceeded on his journey towards Chichester.

There may have been some foundation for the accusations against the Canons, though I cannot believe old Sir John Stanney, who was over seventy, can have been a very great culprit. The fact also that so few years before two visitations were held at which nothing of special gravity was noticed makes it all the more probable that Layton was indulging in one of his coarse exaggerations. On the other hand the Bishop's preliminary suppression shows undoubtedly that the house must have been in a state of decadence, though we have only got Layton's word for it.

George Waldern took the letter himself to Cromwell, but it

1. State Paper, 1535, p. 533, and original in Public Record Office.

2. It is impossible to believe that twenty-six women were discovered on the premises.

is unlikely that he was allowed to plead the cause of his house before the King's powerful favourite.

The Bishop of Chichester with whom Layton was "willing to be somewhat plain," was Robert Sherburne, a favourite of Henry VIII and known as "one of the greatest pluralists of his age." He was distinguished for his hospitality and munificence and for the scarcely credible expenditure which he made in repairing and embellishing the cathedral and the manorial residences of his diocese. No doubt the marble pillars, tiles, lead, etc., from Shulbrede came in useful. Anyhow Layton was evidently annoyed at being done out of part of his spoils in this case, and except in its landed property the Priory can hardly have benefited the Exchequer at all.

Before quoting the Inventories, I will give the full survey of the property of the Priory taken from the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, the great record of the possessions of the Church in England, the compilation of which heralded the destruction of the monastic system, and from a Summary of the *Valor* in the Rents and Surveys Roll :—

	£	s.	d.
Profits of lands in the hands of the Prior for the use of his house . . . . .	106	8	
Rents of lands and tenements in Wellynchemer . . . . .	17	6	5
Rents in Yapton and Rustyngton . . . . .	6	15	2
Rents in Chichester . . . . .	0	30	4
Rents in Midhurst . . . . .	0	3	0
Farm of a Mill in Coutershall . . . . .	0	53	4
Rents in Lavant . . . . .	23	10	0
Profits of the court there in fines and amercement in ordinary years . . . . .	0	12	0
Rents in Petworth . . . . .	0	16	0
Rents in Parham . . . . .	0	5	0
Rents in Bramshott . . . . .	0	12	9
Rents in Glynde . . . . .	0	6	8
Rents in Lewes . . . . .	0	0	10
Rents in Haslemere . . . . .	0	2	4
Rents in Lurgershall . . . . .	0	10	6
Rents of a Mill in Lowdell . . . . .	0	2	0
Rents in Tullington . . . . .	0	0	12
Rents in Almodeston in le Manwood . . . . .	0	13	4
Rents in Fernest . . . . .	0	0	6
Rent of a Chapel in Lynches . . . . .	0	3	4



## The Dissolution

Farm of the Rectory of Lavant appropriated to the Priory . . . . .	£	s.	d.
Profits of a Chapel in Lynchmer belonging to the Priory . . . . .	14	17	6
Total of the temporalities and spiritualities . . . . .	0	66	10
	79	15	6

From which reprisals deducted in accordance with the form of instructions :—

	£	s.	d.
To the Bishop of Chichester for synod for the Churches of Lavaunt and Wellynchmer . . . . .	0	3	0
and for procurations of the same Churches . . . . .	0	3	4
To the Archdeacon of Chichester for procurations of the same Churches . . . . .	0	13	4
Payment of Rent.			
To the Mayor of Chichester as rent paid for lands within that city . . . . .	0	0	6½
Pensions and Indemnities.			
To the Prior of Lewes as an annual pension . . . . .	0	20	0
To the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of Chichester for the indemnity of the Church of Lavant . . . . .	0	2	0
Alms to the poor for the soul of Candeller . . . . .	0	4	1
Fee of the Seneschal, bailiff and receiver.			
To the Seneschal of the court of the said Priory for his annual fee . . . . .	0	26	8
To John Bell bailiff of the Priory for annual fee . . . . .	0	26	8
To William Brym' receiver of the rents of this monastery for annual fee . . . . .	0	40	0
Total of the reprisals and deductions . . . . .	6	19	7½
And it is worth clear	£72	15	10½
The tithe therefrom	£7	5	7¼

The Chapel of Lynch has a separate entry :—

“ The Chapel of Lynches—John Pertsys clerk, the chaplain there is worth clear 72s. 8d. a year besides 5s. paid to the Archdeacon of Chichester for procurations, 18s. to the Bishop of Chichester for synod and 10d. for procurations and 3s. 4d. to the Prior of Shulbrede for annual pension—The tithe therefrom 7s. 3¼d.”

The complete Inventory of the goods of the Priory is given

in the accounts of the Commissioners (1536-7)<sup>1</sup> "who were going the rounds to dissolve and suppress the monasteries," and who charged their accounts "for their horses, travelling expenses, and for the carriage of the plate and jewels, also for books and evidences" :—

## PRIORY OF SHELBREDE.

### Jewels.

Of the price of 34 ounces of silver issuing in respect of the Jewels and silver vessels of the goods of the same late Priory. That is to say of pure silver 10 ounces the worth of an ounce 3s. 4d. and silver parcel gilt 24 ounces the worth of an ounce 3s. 8d. so delivered by the said accountant to the Treasurers of the Court of Augmentation of the Lord the King and to the same Lord the King's use as appears by the book aforesaid remaining £6 16s.

### Ornaments of the Church.

Of the price of all the ornaments of the Church there and also of the paintings, pictures and other things within the same Church sold to diverse persons as appears by the book thereof made, seen and remaining 53s. 4d.

### Goods of the House.

Of the price of all the moveable goods of the house there in like manner sold in parcel beyond the beds of the Prior and convent given to them by the Lords the King's Commissioners of the same lord the King's alms as appears by the said accountant's book thereof may it seem examined and remaining 110s. 4d.

### Grain.

Of the price of all kinds of grain—Nothing because they had none.

### Chattels in stock.

Of the price of all kinds of chattels of the moveable goods of the said late monastery in like manner sold by the said accountant as appears by the book aforesaid £35 16s.

### Lead.

Of the price of the lead there found—Nothing because none was found there.

### The Bells.

Of the price of four small bells weighing 10½ cwt. in like manner sold by the Lords the King's Commissioners to William

1. Ministers' Accounts, P.R.O., 27 and 28 Henry VIII; *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, XLIV.

## The Dissolution

Bedenwell at 13s. 4d. the cwt. as appears by a certain indenture thereof made, seen, examined and remaining £7.

Building.

Of the price of all the buildings there found by the Lords the King's Commissioners so appraised and estimated 20s.

£57 6s. 4d.

And in money in like manner paid by the said accountant in like manner to five Canons being there of the same Lord the King's alms as openly and manifestly appears in the aforesaid book.

£6 5s. 0d.

And in money in like manner paid to the servants of the said Priory for their wages, liveries and rewards due to them as particularly appears by the said accountant's book thereof made and remaining.

£8 9s. 2d.

And in money paid to William Burrie there for his pension at twelve pounds by the year so granted to him for the term of his life by a certain deed sealed with the seal of the convent there, that is to say such allowance for half a year ending at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel in 28 of the reign of the King aforesaid £6.

£20 14s. 2d.

The other Inventory is entitled :—

The Brief certificates of the Commissioners appointed for the survey of the monasteries and Priories within the County of Sussex as hereafter shall appear.

The Priory of Shulbrede.

Black Canons of the Order of St. Augustine.

Clear yearly value at first survey . . . £62 12 10

ditto at this new survey . . . £75 17 6

62s. of increase—viz. the demayne . . . 46s. 8d.

Religious persons 5 all priests.

Novices Nil.

Incont. None.

Desiring capacities 4.

Servants 13 whereof waiting servants 5,  
hinds 6, women servants 2.

and a Prior quondam having pension by resignation of £7

bells, lead Nil.

and other buildings to be sold by estimation 53s. 4d.

the house in good estate.

The entire value of the movable goods £30

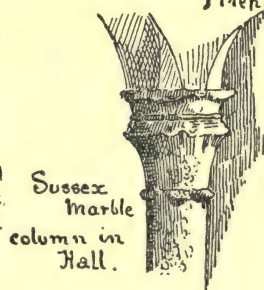
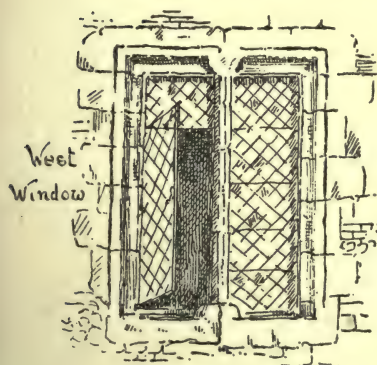
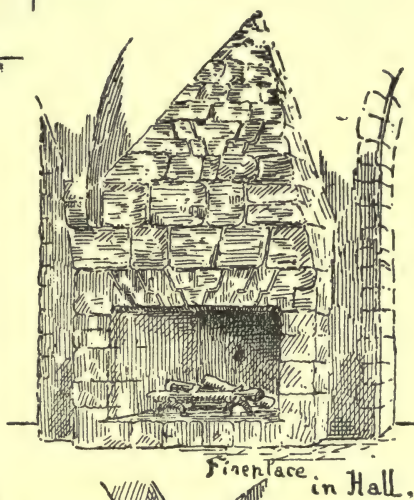
In stores with farmers Nil.

Woods—100 acres all above 20 years. (MS. destroyed).

Parks Nil.

Debts to the House (MS. destroyed).





In addition there is a note of the sale of the bells :—

“ William Madenwell<sup>1</sup> (called ‘ Bedenwell ’ in the other Inventory) of Petersfield, mercer and Richard Randall of the same, fuller, for the bells and other goods by them bought of the Commissioners aforesaid and as yet unpaid as appears by their obligation dated 18th day of October, 29 Henry VIII to be paid at the feast of St. Michael the Archangel then next following. £9 6s. 8d.

From these inventories we gather that there were five Canons in the house—the Prior, John Stanney, Nicholas Dunke and two not named—making up the number that it had been promised in 1241 “ to provide and keep to celebrate divine service for the souls of William de Percy and his ancestors and heirs for ever.” The Prior quondam was William Burrey who must have returned from Tortington Priory, which of course suffered the same fate. In all there were twenty-three persons resident in the house. Prior George Waldern received a pension, the grant being contained in a Royal letter dated March 17th, 1537, setting forth that since by the authority of Parliament the late Priory of Shulbrede was dissolved, where one George Wallden was Prior at the time of the suppression and long before,—“ We, wishing to grant the same George a reasonable annual pension or fit promotion for his living and that he may sustain proper state, grant him an annual pension of £10 for the rest of his life or till he shall have been promoted to one or more ecclesiastical benefices or other suitable promotion, of the clear annual value of £10.” In the “ List of yearly pensions of every religious man of the late dissolved monasteries within the counties of Surrey and Sussex in the receipt of William Saunders, Esq.,” may be found “ Shelbrede two, one at £12 (Will Burreys) and one at 40s. (George Dealden).” This is inaccurate with regard to George Waldern, who got £10. Why the retired Prior got more than the Prior in office is not explained. (It may have been because the £12 was paid by the Priory before the Dissolution, it being included in the list

1. William Madenwell was concerned in appropriating cattle from Dureford Abbey, *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, VII, 224.

of liabilities. The Government accepted this. But in the case of Waldern, they fixed it themselves, and thought £10 enough.) These sums should be multiplied four or fivefold to give their equivalent value in modern money.

The house was finally dissolved on or about March 25th, 1537, about eighteen months after Dr. Layton's visit. The King assumed possession of all the property, and the canons with their small pensions, and "of the King's great charity" their beds, were forced to leave their old homes and go out into the world in search of whatever refuge they could find.

Chapuy, the Imperial Ambassador, describes in his letters the extraordinary state of affairs which was the result of this drastic suppression of monasteries:—

"It is a lamentable thing," he writes, "to see a legion of monks and nuns who have been chased from their monasteries, wandering miserably hither and thither seeking means to live and several honest men have told me that what with monks and nuns and persons dependent on the monasteries suppressed there were over 20,000 who knew not how to live."

The furniture of the house was eventually taken away by the Commissioners, but the Canons were no doubt allowed to take their beds with them. As for the books, there must have been a good collection. In fact, as Fuller says, the English monks were bookish in themselves and much inclined to hoard up monuments of learning. All these treasures disappeared. Grocers and soapsellers bought the manuscripts for business purposes, and whole libraries were sold for a few shillings and used as waste paper. The only remnant of the library at Shulbrede which is known to exist is the Manuscript at King's College, Cambridge, mentioned on page 89.

In spite of all the harshness, cruelty and injustice which characterised the execution of the policy of the Reformation, and which I have perhaps made the most of in my desire to exculpate my religious predecessors, it must be acknowledged that the monasteries had ceased to be popular in the country. The monastic system had come to be regarded with disfavour as being incompatible with family life and the charities of



home and kinship. It had served its purpose, not without success for a time, but that time had now passed. At the end of the fifteenth century they had ceased to be seats of learning. "I found in them" says Poggio, an Italian traveller, "men given up to sensuality in abundance but very few lovers of learning." The invention of printing made unnecessary one of the special forms of monastic industry, namely the laborious copying of manuscripts. On the other hand the disappearance of the monasteries must have been seriously felt on account of their having been, in many cases, successful farmers and dispensers of substantially endowed charities. The loss from the aesthetic point of view was considerable, as many beautiful examples of mediaeval architecture were destroyed or allowed to fall in ruins. It was the sight of Waverley Abbey, where Layton stayed on his way to Shulbrede, that inspired a fine passage in Cobbett's "History of the Protestant Reformation," in which he dilates on the disappearance of the monasteries in his usual vigorous style:—

"Look at the cloister, now become in the hands of some rack renter the receptacle for dung, fodder and faggotwood. See the hall, where for ages the widow, the orphan, the aged and the stranger found a table ready spread. See a bit of its wall now helping to make a cattle shed, the rest having been hauled away to build a warehouse. Recognise in the side of the barn a part of the once magnificent Chapel: and if chained to the spot by your melancholy musings you be admonished of the approach of night by the voice of the screech owl from those arches which once at the same hour resounded with vespers of the monk, and which have for 700 years been assailed by storms and tempests in vain:—if thus admonished of the necessity of seeking food, shelter and a bed, lift up your eyes and look at the whitewashed and dry-rotten shed on the hill called the 'Gentleman's House'; and apprised of the 'board wages' and 'spring guns' which are the signs of his hospitality, turn your head, jog away from the scene of former comfort and grandeur; and with old English welcoming in your mind, reach the nearest inn and then in a room, half-warmed and half-lighted, with a reception precisely proportioned to the presumed length of your purse, sit down and listen to an account of the hypocritical pretences, the base motives, the tyrannical and bloody means under which, from

which, and by which the ruin you have been witnessing was effected, and the hospitality you have lost was forever banished from the land."

The old foundation of Sir Ralph de Arderne had passed through the chances and changes of good and evil fortunes for nearly three centuries and a half. The Austin Canons of Shulbrede had seen times of prosperity and times of adversity and decay. Out of the few members of this community whose names are found in the records, some distinguished themselves, while others brought discredit upon themselves and eventually, it may be, dishonour to the establishment. But many more names than appear in these pages are lost in oblivion. Its extreme seclusion, a characteristic of the Priory which is dwelt upon so often in the records, is responsible for the fact of its being so little known to the outer world. For no wayfarer would wander so far afield to pass through the woods and over the commons in this out of the way part of the country where the distant chimes from the belfry of Shulbrede might have led him to seek the hospitality of the Black Canons.

Who knows but this very seclusion may not have made it a haven of refuge for some troubled souls during those centuries, and the wonderful beauties of the valley and the woodland hills may not have helped to raise some from the weariness and cares of life.





REMAINS OF HARDHAM PRIORY.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Owners of the Dissolved Priory.

THE other Augustinian Houses in Sussex of course suffered the same fate as Shulbrede. Hardham was granted to Sir William Goring. Thomas Cromwell himself took Michelham, which was a rather larger foundation than the others. Its fine three-storied gate-house with a bridge and considerable remains of the refectory are still standing, as well as a Tudor manor-house which was subsequently built on to the remains of the Priory. Pynham had been suppressed in 1525 by Cardinal Wolsey, and its revenues granted to Christchurch, Oxford. The exact date of the surrender of Tortington is unknown, but it was soon after 1535. The Austin Canons of Hastings had moved from the place of their original foundation. The sea encroached on the Priory until it was in danger of being swept away, and in 1431 they were granted a site by Sir John Pelham and settled at Warbleton under the name of "the New Priory of Hastings." The remains, with a Tudor house attached, are very romantically situated far away from the high road in the depths of a wood.



For many years skulls, to which some strange tradition was attached, were kept in one of the rooms and the house was declared to be haunted. At its downfall Hastings Priory was handed over to John Baker.

The Priory of Shulbrede was granted by charter by Henry VIII to Sir William Fitzwilliam, High Admiral of England, afterwards created Earl of Southampton. It would have appeared more natural if the King had granted the Priory to its patron the Earl of Northumberland (as Richard Layton seems to suggest in his letter to Thomas Cromwell). But Henry Algernon, 6th Earl of Northumberland, cannot have been regarded with favour by the King. I find that he entertained a strong and early passion for the beautiful Anne Boleyn but under the irresistible influence of Henry VIII, his father urged him to renounce all intentions of making that lady his wife. Moreover he died in 1537 and his brother, Sir William Percy, having been previously attainted and executed all the honours of his family became temporarily forfeited.<sup>1</sup> This accounts for the King having selected his favourite Sir William Fitzwilliam, who lived close by, as the recipient of his gift.

The property is described as follows :—

The house and site of the late Priory of Shelbrede *alias* Shulbrede, Sussex, the church the belfry and churchyard of the said Priory, a field called le Westfeld, a meadow called Beriesmede, a small croft of land adjoining the said meadow, a piece of land called Newland, a piece of pasture called William at Redes, a piece of land and wood called Okeredes, a piece of land and wood called Cokner, and a moor, a piece of woodland and marsh called Lyvermershe, a croft of land called le Condyt crofte, a piece of land called Grenehills, a piece of land called Welches and the land called Rodelond, Bishop's hurst, Courtland and Condyt meadow, all of which lie in Schuldbrede *alias* Shelbrede and Wellynchmere, Sussex, and belong to the same Priory.<sup>2</sup> Also the rectory of Lavant and advowson of the vicarage thereof and the chapel of Lynchmere belonging to the same late Priory, and all manors, messuages, etc., in the vills or fields of Shelbrede *alias* Shulbrede, Wellynchmere, Yapton,

1. Burke's *Peerage*.

2. Most of these fields can still be traced under the same names to this day.

Rustynton, Chichester, Midhurst, Petworth, Lavant, Parham, Bramsbott, Glynde, Lewes, Hasilmere, Lurgashall, Londell, Almodinton in le Manwood, Fernhurst, Tullington and Lynches, Sussex, which belonged to the said Priory to which George Wallden, the late Prior held in right of the same on the 4th of Feb., 27 Henry VIII.<sup>1</sup>

When the Earl of Southampton died in 1543 it was duly noted that the King had given the Priory of Shulbrede to him.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the possessions of the Priory passed into other hands. There is a grant in 1592 of lands in Sussex to "William Tipper and Robert Dawe of London, Gentlemen," in which occurs "Compton and Washington all lands tenements and hereditaments in, lately belonging to the Monastery or Priory of Shulbrede."

The manor of Shulbrede within the parish of Yapton<sup>3</sup> which was granted to the Priory by Edward de St. John became the property of John Edmondes in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and in 1613 "Walter Edmondes died seized of this manor leaving William Edmondes his son and heir—value £6 11s. 0d." The old mill at Coultershaw must have gone back to the Percy family. In 1703 a court Roll records:—

"Item. We present that the Lord and Lady of the Manor do keep up a mill called Coutershoal Mill for the conveniency and service of the tennants and that it is the custom of this manor for the tennants to grind at the said mill and all those that refuse to grind at the said mill we doe amerce them for the same four shillings a piece."

The mill, though still ancient in appearance, is now fitted up in the interior with all the most modern milling machinery.

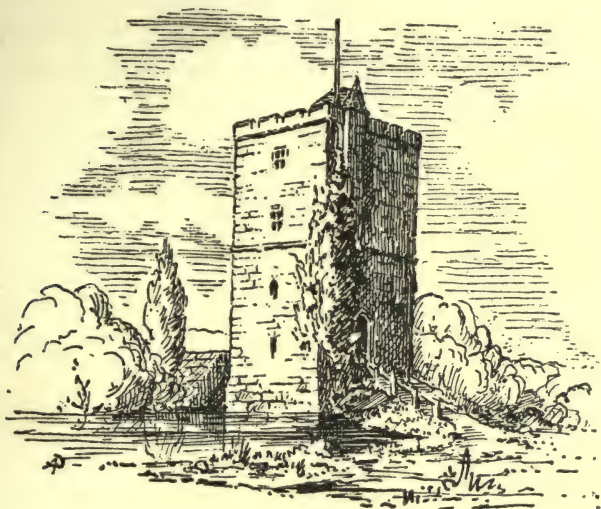
Stanley, which was handed over to the Priory by the Abbey of Durford in 1248, fell eventually into the hands of the Butler family. The younger son of a noble house in Ireland left his native land in troubled times and settled there in the early seventeenth century. The old house, now a farm, stands high up on the edge of the common which stretches down towards

1. State Papers, vol. XII, Part 2.

2. *Inq. post mortem*, 13 Henry VIII.

3. Referred to by Horsfield as "Shulbrede or Wallinchmere Manor."

Liphook. "Here," says a memoir of the family, "on Sundays the good man seated himself upon old Dobbin, with his loving helpmate behind him upon a pad and decked out in her gayest apparel with mob cap long stays and slit sleeves and paraded to Lynchmere Church accompanied by their boys and girls on foot." To this church he left by his will, dated 1638, sixpence and 5s. to its poor, while Fernhurst, his real parish, received 12*d.* and 10*s.* for its poor. He left his eldest son Walter 5*s.*, his younger



GATE HOUSE, MICHELHAM.

son George £100, and his daughter Joan "all woods and underwoods in Stanley oak and all timber trees excepted." His will is witnessed by John Chalcroft and Roger Shotter of Linchmere. Walter his son must have been well off judging by his will (1696). He leaves his wife Elizabeth "two feather beds, two bedsteads blankets, coverlets, all my napkins, half my sheets table cloths and pillow drawers, six of my leather chairs in the hall, the round table in the hall chamber, six bushels of wheat and of malt, half my pewter, £10 of lawful money one cwt. of cheese and one hogg." He also left legacies



to the children of his two daughters, Mary Martin and Joan Rapley.<sup>1</sup> Walter, the grandson, who married Mary Rigges, daughter of Edward Rigges, rector of Lynchmere, "kept open house for a fortnight after his marriage, and there were large tables on the green near the house every day loaded with the old English fare of roast beef and other substantial dishes, and whoever liked to partake of it was welcome."<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of his life this Walter Butler bought a farm called Shorts, at Bramshott. He died in 1722, and was succeeded by his son John, a prosperous iron master. For several succeeding generations the family continued to hold property in Bramshott.

To return to the disposition of the estates belonging to the Priory. Part of the property in Chichester was granted in April, 1545, to one William Berners, and part to John Amery and Alexander Hardham; the advowsons of the churches of Midlavant and Lynchmere went to the May family.

### *Linch.*

The Priory held land in Linch and received rent from the Chapel, though as will be seen it is not mentioned in the post-dissolution survey of 1608.

Linch is situated about two miles to the south-west of Shulbrede and its history can be traced back farther than that of either Lynchmere or Fernhurst. It is mentioned in the Domesday survey thus:—

Robert (son of Tetbald Sheriff of the rape of Arundel) holds of the earl (Roger) Lince. Ulvric held it of King Edward. Then as (et) now, it was assessed for 5 hides. There is land for 6 ploughs. On the demesne is 1 plough and (there are) 7 villeins and 5 bordars<sup>3</sup> with 2 ploughs. There (is) a church and 2 serfs and 3 acres of meadow and wood (land yielding) 10 swine. In Chichester (is) 1 haw of 10 pence. In the time of King Edward it was worth 8 pounds and afterwards 4 pounds, now 100 shillings.<sup>4</sup>

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. XX, 10; vol. XXX, 296.

2. Capes' "Rural Life in Hampshire."

3. The bordars came next below the villeins and above the serfs.

4. Victoria "History of Sussex," vol. I, p. 423.

In 1241 "Matilde wife of Simon de Neston sued Henry Toli for 5 acres and a half of land in Lincses." The grant of free warren (a franchise to have and keep game within the manor) in Lynch as well as in Lynchmere was made over to William de Echyngham in 1295. Lynch or Lenche is included in an interesting return of parishes containing less than ten inhabitants made in 1428. In 1442 it is recorded that William Shorter was ordained as secular sub-deacon *ad titulum prioratus de Shulbrede*. But two years later the Bishop himself appoints John Derneford as chaplain.<sup>1</sup>

The part of the parish round the church came to be known in the seventeenth and eighteenth century as Woodmans Green. A few of the old houses surrounding the green are still standing but the green itself was enclosed in the Hollycombe estate and no longer exists. In the early part of the seventeenth century the church<sup>2</sup> fell into ruin and remained during the Commonwealth unused. A note occurs in the Lynchmere church register in 1635, written by Edward Clavelshay the rector, to the following effect:—

Demolished Church of Lynch. The parishioners having no claim of right to go to divine service, to receive the Holy Sacraments nor bury their dead but lost as straying sheep without a shepherd sometime to one church and sometime to another and then put thence to their great grief and vexation.

In 1700 the church was at last rebuilt. At the end of the Linch church register five depositions are entered in which some of the ancient inhabitants record their recollection of a church having existed, with a view no doubt of identifying the spot as consecrated ground. They are dated 1697. The first is by James Philip, the second by William Ayling. The third by Robert Bettsworth may be quoted as an example:—

"These are to certify whom it may concern that I Robert Bettsworth of the parish of Linch in the county of Sussex aged about 80 years can remember Linch chappel in the parish of Linch commonly called St. Lukes Chappel standing and

1. Epis. Reg. Chich., Praty, ff. 33, 112.

2. Marked in all the early maps of Sussex as St. Luke's Chapel.

almost (? straight) and about 48 years ago there were stones and mortar brought to rebuild it but not built, the reason was that one Mr. Arthur<sup>1</sup> that then was the minister there of dying with a fall from his horse was wholly omitted and left unbuilt to this day witness thereof hath hereunto set his mark. R. B. his mark."

The fourth deposition is by Nicholas Ede and the fifth by Robert Glasher who says he "can remember when St. Lukes Chapel stood in its ruins and that he saw doors of the said Chapel hanging in its place and that he heard his mother say she had been at prayers in the said Chapel."

Peter Bettsworth the churchwarden who took down these depositions, declares "This writing lyeth in the old churchwardens hand and this is a true count of them word by word." And when the new church was built he had the following inscription cut in stone over the south door: "April the first 1700. Peter Bettsworth was chose churchwarden for two repaire and rebuild this Chappel in Linch and did continue twelve years 1712."

A silver chalice was presented to the church by the Bishop of Chichester in 1706. The new church has no features of interest. None of the old building remains although some of the foundations have been traced.

The parish comprises Redford, where there is an old house known as Hookland now incorporated into a modern residence which is traditionally supposed to have been a hunting lodge of King John. In 1879 detached portions of Stedham and Woolbeding, and Lynch down or Lynch Ball near Bepton, were included in the parish.

### *The Survey of 1608.*

The last survey of the possessions of the Priory is dated 1608.<sup>2</sup> Apparently it was not unusual after the Reformation for surveys to be made of the property of dissolved religious houses even up to a later date.

1. Referred to in the Lynchmere register as "Mr. Dixon Arthur, a Walshman."

2. Land Revenue Misc. Books, no. 197, f. 86.



It is headed :—

COMITATUS SUSSEXIE—SHULBRED.

Supervisus nuper dissoluti prioratus de Shulbred predicta factus apud Arundell decimo quarto die Septembris anno regni domini nostri, etc., per Thomam Marshall generosum supervisorem possessionum dicti domini Regis in comitatu predicto virtuti Commissioni extra Scaccarium suum sibi directe per sacramentum diversorum proborum hominum.

Then follow the names of the witnesses for each district and a description of the lands with the name of the occupant. Some entries coincide with those made in the survey at the time of the Dissolution, but there are several additional places included.

The land in Lynchmere is described as follows :—

Decanus et Capitulum Cicestrensis Ecclesie	} VI <i>d.</i> et I libra piperis.
clamant tenere iis et successoribus suis	
videlicet	
Unum croftum terre vocatum	
Howfield per estimacionem	} iiii acres.

The survey ends with a summary :—

Summa omnium Rediturum Quietorum	} examinatur. XLVII <i>s.</i> - III <i>d.</i> et I lib. piperis.
infra parochias separates predictas et	
prioratui de Shulbred nuper dissoluto	
pertinentium videlicet.	
in Parham Vs.	
Lergasale VII <i>Is.</i> IIII <i>d.</i>	
Tillington XII <i>d.</i>	
Hasell-mere II <i>s.</i> IIII <i>d.</i>	
Benton VIII <i>d.</i>	
Linchmere VI et I libra paperis	
Bramshott XI <i>s.</i>	
Gline VI <i>s.</i> VIII <i>d.</i>	
Sanctus Thomas X <i>d.</i>	
infra Clivam	
Petworth VII <i>Is.</i>	
Medhurst III <i>s.</i>	

Then follows a "demissio" which refers to Shottermill.

*The Montagues of Cowdray.*

On his death Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, to whom the Priory itself had been granted, left his estates to his half brother Sir Antony Browne, of Battle Abbey, whose heir was created first Viscount Montague. I must resist the temptation of going at any length into the very interesting and romantic history of the Montagues of Cowdray. Not many years ago Mrs. Roundell wrote the history of the house and of the distinguished members of the family who lived there, in a small but entertaining volume which is now difficult to obtain.<sup>1</sup> But it will not be out of place to give a very brief account of those who became owners of the dissolved Priory and the greater part of its possessions for 250 years after its suppression.

Sir Antony Browne's father was Standard Bearer to Henry VIII and he himself became Standard Bearer and Master of the Horse to Henry VIII as well as a Knight of the Garter. The dissolved Abbey of Battle was granted to him and, on succeeding to his half brother Sir William Fitzwilliam, he inherited among other lands and possessions the dissolved Priories of Easebourne, Shulbrede, Bayham and Calceto and the Cistercian Abbey of Waverley.

On coming into his inheritance and thereby becoming lord of lands formerly the property of the Church, the legend has it that Sir Antony was solemnly cursed by a monk of Battle Abbey and also by the Prioress of Easebourne, a Benedictine Priory which closely adjoins Cowdray Park, and of which considerable remains, including the whole outer shell of the refectory, are still standing, and have lately been rebuilt and repaired. The concluding words of the curse were "By fire and water shall thy line come to end and it shall perish out of the land." As will be seen this was literally and absolutely fulfilled, although in all probability the curse was imagined after its fulfilment.

Sir Antony's heir, created Viscount Montague by Queen

1. "Cowdray: the History of a Great English House."—Mrs. Charles Roundell. See also Sir W. St. John Hope's "History of Cowdray" (1920).



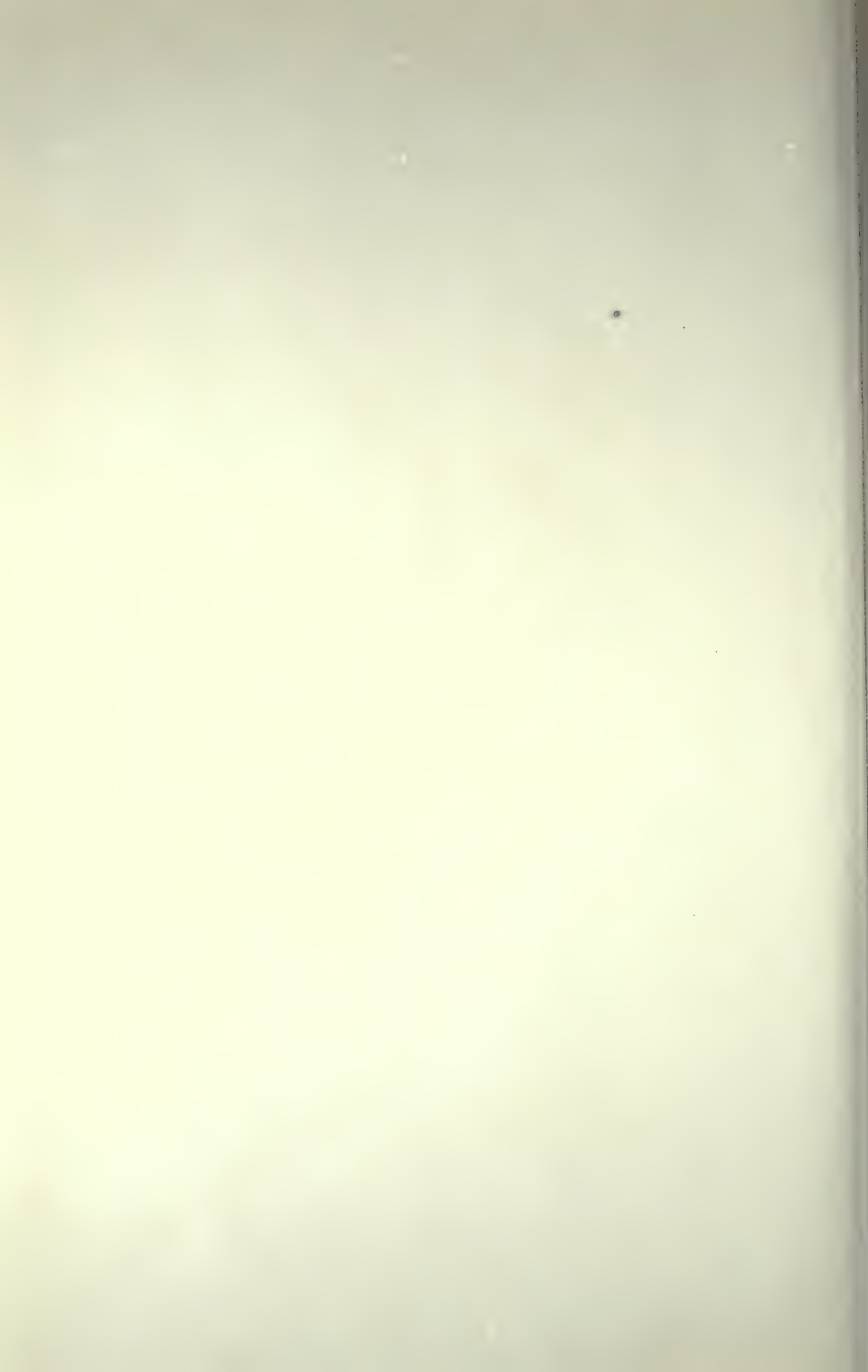
COWDRAY BEFORE THE FIRE



RUINS OF COWDRAY HOUSE

1806





Mary, entertained at Cowdray Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth. The description given by the former of his visit is contained in a letter addressed by the King, then aged sixteen, to his friend and former whipping boy Barnaby FitzPatrick, who was serving in the French Army :—

“ For whereas you have all been occupied in killing your enemies, in long marchings, in pained journies, in extreme heat, in sore skirmishing and divers assaults, we have been occupied in killing of wild beasts, in pleasant journies, in good fare, in viewing fair countries, and rather have sort how to fortify our own than to spoil another man's, and being thus determined came to Guildford from thence to Petworth and so to Cowdray where we were marvelously yea rather excessively banketted.”

Queen Elizabeth's visit lasted a week, she and her “ whole court were magnificently entertained.” In “ the Progresses and Processions of Queen Elizabeth ” a very elaborate account is given of the entertainments arranged for her. Every day persons clothed in various disguises addressed speeches of a highly eulogistic nature to her in which she was hailed as “ Fortune's Empress,” “ The World's Wonder ” and “ Nature's Glory.” The feasting was on a very large scale. The day she arrived “ the proportion of breakfast was three oxen and one hundred and fourtie geese.” The principal amusement was shooting deer in the park. The Queen killed three or four. Lady Kildare was the only other member of the party who ventured to shoot and though she only killed one deer Elizabeth was so much displeased with her audacity “ that she did not afterwards dine at the Royal Table.”

Lord Montague completed the additions to Cowdray, making it as Freeman says “ one of the greatest houses of the best house-building time.” He had the large frescoes painted in the Buck hall, and firebacks decorated with the Montague arms cast at Fernhurst for every chamber in the house. Many of these are still to be found in the surrounding district. In farmhouse days there was one in the Prior's Chamber at Shulbrede.

The Montague family were now in high favour with the

sovereign, and at the same time ardent and devoted Roman Catholics. In 1592 Antony Maria Browne succeeded his father as second Viscount. He compiled the curious book of orders and rules for the direction of his household. No fewer than thirty-seven different ranks of servants are mentioned and minute descriptions given of their duties. This Lord Montague was found to be implicated in the Gunpowder Plot. He was compelled to pay a fine and imprisoned during the King's pleasure. He died in 1629.

In the time of Francis his son, who succeeded him, there is a record in the Feet of Fines (16 Car. II) of a transfer of lands which shows the extent of the possessions round Shulbrede that were in the hands of the family. It is summarised thus :—

“ A fine the morrow of the Ascension between Edw : Thurland Esq. and Jn. Turner gent. Querelants, and Francis Viscount Montagu Deforciant, of the manors of Shulbred and Wullinchmere alias Lynchmere with appurtenances and 20 messuages, 10 cottages, 20 gardens, 20 orchards, 300 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 40 acres of pasture, 300 acres of wood, 500 acres of furze and heath in Lynchmere and Fernhurst.”

Antony the 6th Viscount is the next of the line who calls for any attention. He sold Battle Abbey and lived entirely at Cowdray, the family having gradually become greatly impoverished. His son, Antony Joseph, was the first to renounce the Roman Catholic faith under the influence of the Countess of Huntingdon, and he brought up his son, George Samuel, the 8th Viscount in the strictest Calvinistic Protestantism.

The tragic fate that now befell this illustrious family has already been foreshadowed. In the year 1793 when only twenty-four years old, Lord Montague while boating on the Rhine at Schaffhausen was wrecked and drowned. The messenger who was sent back to England with the sad news of his lordship's death crossed another messenger who was hastening from Cowdray with the tidings of the destruction of the castle by fire. Thus was the curse fulfilled and indeed



to the letter, for a distant cousin, a friar of Fontainebleau who succeeded as 9th Viscount obtained a special dispensation from the Pope to marry, but left no issue. There being no other male descendant the title therefore became extinct. The heiress to the property was Elizabeth Mary Browne, sister of the 8th Viscount. She married W. S. Poyntz and had three daughters and two sons. Strange to say both sons were drowned at Bognor before the eyes of their mother and sisters, who were watching them from a window overlooking the sea. The old house was never restored but allowed to become a picturesque and beautiful ruin.

In addition to the fact that a large number of books and manuscripts must have been burned in the fire, which smouldered on for a fortnight before it was extinguished; no sort of care seems to have been taken of what remained. Sir L. Scott, who visited the ruins as late as 1863, writes:—

“The floor was strewn with parchment and papers. Some had been thrust by handfuls into the cupboards and many were gathered in little heaps in corners where gusts of wind had probably driven them and where damp had caused them to adhere in masses rendering many of them illegible, for small traces of glazing remained in the window casements, consequently the rain could penetrate from any quarter . . . The collectors of autographs and seals had in frequent cases torn off these appendages: doubtless many documents had been carried away wholly, but generally they were thus mutilated and then flung down on the floor as valueless.”

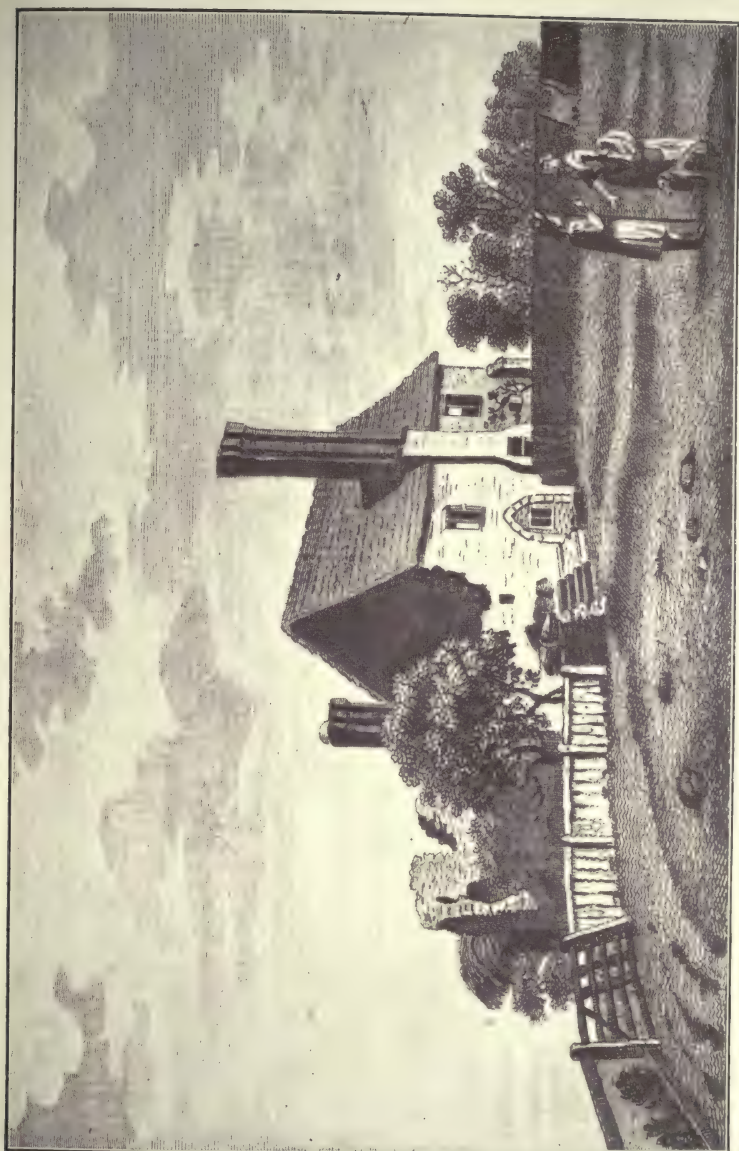
A great many documents which would have thrown some light on Shulbredian history no doubt perished in this way. On the death of Mr. Poyntz in 1840 the Cowdray estate was divided between his three daughters who subsequently became Lady Clinton, the Countess Spencer and the Marchioness of Exeter. Three years later Cowdray was sold to George James, sixth Earl of Egmont. In 1909 the property passed from the Egmont family into the hands of Sir Weetman Pearson, now Viscount Cowdray, who by judicious restoration successfully prevented the old ruined house from crumbling to the ground. Lord Cowdray recently transferred the property to his son,

Major the Hon. Harold Pearson, the present owner. In the meanwhile the Priory ceased to be part of the Cowdray estate in 1905 when it was bought by its present owners. It continued, however, to be the Court House of the Manor.

*Patrons and Owners of Shulbrede Priory.*

Ralph de Arderne the Founder and his son Thomas		<i>circ.</i> 1190—1239
William de Percy of Petworth	}	1239—1537
Henry de Percy		
Three Lords Percy and six Earls of Northumberland		
The Earl of Southampton		1537—1543
Sir Anthony Browne and seven Viscounts Montague of Cowdray		1534—1793
Elizabeth Mary Browne and her husband Stephen Poyntz		1793—1840
Lady Clinton, the Honourable Elizabeth Spencer, and the Marchioness of Exeter		1840—1843
The 6th, 7th and 8th Earls of Egmont		1843—1905
Arthur and Dorothea Ponsonby		1905

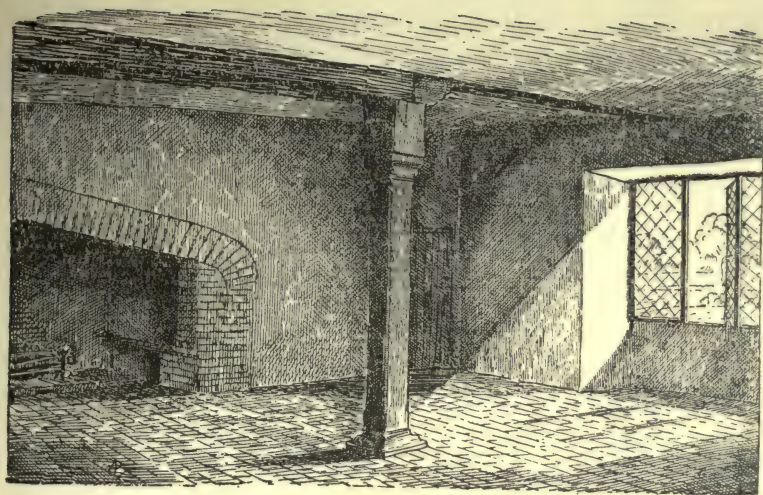




THE PRIORY  
(From a late eighteenth century print)







THE DINING ROOM.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### Residents after the Dissolution.

**A**FTER the Canons had been ejected there was probably some interval before any tenant was installed in the Priory buildings. It cannot have been a convenient residence. The ruined chapel and chapter house were useless and the rest of the building could not have been well adapted for a private house. The gate house was standing and seems, as we shall see, to have formed an important part of the dwelling house.

George Waldern the last Prior may have lived on in part of the Priory as he became rector of Lynchmere, but the first resident seems to have been John Todman, and his will dated 1551<sup>1</sup> is the evidence of his occupation of the premises. He

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. VII, 147.

says " Mary my wife to be executrix that she do have and occupy my farm called Shelbrede during four years and if so be that she do marry again before four years be expired then I will my son William Todman to have and occupy the aforesaid farm called Shelbrede."

Mary Todman did not marry again. In her will dated six years later (1557)<sup>1</sup> she is not described as being " of Shulbrede," the four years having elapsed, but she evidently held land as she leaves " bullocks " and " herds of cattle."

Next we come to Perter Thecstone whose will is dated Feb. 4th, 1560.<sup>2</sup> He is described as " late farmer of Sheldred." This may mean that he resided in the Priory before the Todman's but there is room for him between the Todman's and Richard Shorye who came subsequently. The name Thecstone<sup>3</sup> is very uncommon. I have not come across it elsewhere in Sussex. Perter mentions no children in his will. The wearing apparel of which he disposes gives us some idea of the outfit of an Elizabethan yeoman farmer.

He bequeaths to William Smythe " a croft of moure grounde lying within new lands " (on the west of Shulbrede) for the term of 12 years: " to my cousyn John Thecstone my best lyking cob and my letyll saddle and brydle, my bowts and spures and my best hatt." To " my kinsman Andrew Dawkins my best capp, my velvet nyght capp ": " to George Adcock my sword and my buckler ": " to my man John Dudman my second lyking colt ": to his two maids " ewe shepe ": " to George of Bendbowe my yeallow hose ": " to William Smythe a fresh cob and a canvis doublet ": " to Richard Egge (? Egger) my best canvis doublet and all the residue of my goods moveable and immovable with my lease and all things thereto belonging." He appoints his wife, Margaret, executrix. The curate of Lynchmere, Robert Brownryg, is one of the witnesses.

Richard Shorye the next occupant must have come to

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. IX, 65.

2. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. X, 90.

3. A Theakestone of Guildford is mentioned in 1669 in ' the Household books of Sir Giles Stapleton, Bart.'—*The Ancestor*, vol. III.



Shulbrede before 1563 as the christening of his daughter Agnes is entered in the register in that year. He was a yeoman farmer and his will dated March 3rd, 1587,<sup>1</sup> throws some light on his circumstances and family connections.

He is described as "Richard Shorye of Shylbred yeoman." He gives instructions for his body to be buried in the churchyard of Lynchmere. To the church he gives 6*d.*, to the poor 5*s.* To his daughter Agnes Shorye he gives a tenement called Beales (near the old mill north-west of Bramshott church), to his wife Margaret he leaves "my best joyned bedstead, 1 feather bed and feather bolster, two feather pillows, 1 pair of pillow drawers, one pair of blankets, one coverlet, two pairs of sheets and one chest," and the following interesting instruction: "She shall have the use and occupation of the Chamber over the gatehouse that which now I do lye in in Shilbred aforesaid for and during all the lease and term of years that I have yet to come of Shilbred aforesaid if the said Margaret shall live so long sole and unmarried with free egress and regress into and from the said chamber for the said Margaret and her servants, and they (the executors) shall deliver to my wife Margaret good wholesome and sufficient meat, drynke and apparel and all other things convenient and necessary to and for the sustentation, lodging and living of the said Margaret in such convenient manner as the said Margaret has heretofore time sustained and kept during and by all the time that the said Margaret shall live and remain sole and unmarried."

To Alice his daughter, the wife of Roger Shotter, he leaves "all my lease and term of years I have yet to come in all that tenement, houses, buildings and land called Shylbred with the demayne and appurtenances thereto belonging the which I now dwell in and occupy only except and reserved to Margaret my wife the use and occupying of the chamber in the house above specified for the time above limited." The residue went to Roger Shotter his son-in-law who was sole executor. Overseers—Robert Quinnel of Chiddingfold, and Robert Stevens

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. XIV, 83.

of Mydhurst. Witnesses—Robert Luffe, Robert Stevens and Oliver Chytty.

It must have been in Shorye's time that the staircase was built and the large fireplace and chimney in the dining room ; probably at the expense of the Earl of Southampton, the owner.

Roger Shotter therefore came next into possession of the Priory through his wife Alice. His mother-in-law, widow Shorye, had possession of the Chamber over the gatehouse for seven years which must have been rather inconvenient for Roger. She died in 1595. Roger Shotter was born about 1554 and remained at Shulbrede till he died in 1639.

The ramifications of the Shotter family are very intricate and extensive. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a very large number of Shotters appear in the register of Lynchmere and also in the adjacent parishes and they figure very prominently both as tenants and on the homage in the Court Rolls. Owing to the very limited choice of Christian names it is often difficult to detach the successive generations. But the accompanying table drawn up from the registers, rolls and wills shows pretty clearly the genealogy of those members of the family who were connected with Shulbrede and Lynchmere.

Shottermill in the north of Lynchmere parish was originally Shotovermill. Whether the family took their name from the place or the place from the family, or whether they were connected at all is impossible to say. The origin of the family name may simply be Shooter, on the other hand it sometimes occurs as Shotover which supports the argument that the mill was called after the family.

There are two very early Shotters to whom no connection can be traced. Thomas Schotere, witness to a document (already quoted, p. 48) in 1340, and William Shotter whose admission is recorded to the Chantry of Crawley in 1444.<sup>1</sup>

The first member of the family we hear of in the sixteenth century is Robert Shotter who, by his will in 1544,<sup>2</sup> bequeathed to " the hye aulter of St. Peter, Lynchmere, 4*d*." : his son

1. Bishop Praty's Register, vol. IV—*Sussex Record Society*.

2. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. V, 45.

Philip mentioned in his will died in 1582 leaving a widow Idene whose will<sup>1</sup> is dated 1587. She gives the church 12*d.* and the poor 20*d.* She bequeathed cattle to her son William, a sum of money to her daughter Alice, sheep to her son-in-law John Boxall and to her grandchildren "each of them a lamb." To her son Roger she leaves "my best great brass pot" (overseers, Richard Shorye and William Boxhold of Lynchmere). This is the Roger who married Richard Shorye's daughter, Alice, and was resident at Shulbrede for so many years. It will be noted in this will that Roger was bequeathed no cattle and it will be seen by his own will that he left none nor any land. Further, I find in the Court Rolls that the holding known as "Linchmeres," which generally occurs in conjunction with two other holdings, "Wattmans and Elliots," which there is evidence to show lay in the extreme north of the parish, was held by his eldest son William Shotter and passed afterwards to Roger his son by his second wife during his own lifetime. In fact Roger Shotter though he is described as "Roger Shotter of Shulbred, yeoman," in the will of William Boxall of Farnhurst in 1609<sup>2</sup> was not primarily a farmer but a surgeon or doctor. He was certainly very highly thought of in the parish for when he died in 1639 Edward Clavelshay, the rector of Lynchmere, overcome with emotion at the death of a man who was probably his friend and for whom he evidently had the highest admiration, disregarded the invariable practice of only recording the name and date in the register and made the following entry:—

"1639. *The first of August. Roger Shotter of Shulbrede about 86 years of age who had been a liberal house keeper about 60 years an expert Chirurgian and cured in his life time multitudes of impotent poor people of foul and dangerous sorances<sup>3</sup> at his own charge for God's cause, a lover of nature and a compleat Christian.*"

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. XIV, p. 36.

2. Probate P.C. Cant., 14th May, 1610.

3. Illnesses; a sixteenth century term from sore (like grievance from grieve).



The phrase, "a lover of Nature," cannot refer to landscape and scenery in which sense it is quite a modern expression. It must mean either human nature or a lover (*i.e.* a well-wisher) of Nature (*i.e.* naturally). Anyhow, this hospitable old surgeon must have been a remarkable character. His wife Alice died in 1595 and her children seem to have died before their father. By his second wife, Jane Gosden, he had seven children. His will is worth giving in full:<sup>1</sup>—

"In the name of God Amen. (July 27, 1635).

I Roger Shotter of Lynchmere in the County of Sussex yeoman being grown through old age weak of body but of perfect mind and memory most humble thanks do I therefore give to Almighty God and considering my mortality do make this my last will and testament as follows revoking every other my former will and wills whatsoever. First I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God my Creator faithfully believing through the meere merits and mercies of Jesus Christ my only redeemer to have remission of all my sins and my soul to be saved.

I give for the reparation of the Church of Lynchmere 2s., to the poor people of Lynchmere 10s. and to the poor people of Fernhurst 10s. To my son John Shotter all that my yearly rent of £7 lawful money issuing and payable, out of one barn and certain lands of Matthew Cobden commonly known as Eastfold situate lying and being in the parish of Witley. Item. I give to my son John £20 of lawful money of England. Item. I give to my son John my lesser silver cup<sup>2</sup> and bowl. Item. I give to my said son John all my goods and my household stuff now being and which shall at my desease be in my now lodging chamber in my now dwelling house situate at Shulbred in Linchmere aforesaid my money and plate only excepted and foreprized. Item to my said son John all my goods and household stuff now being in the studdie called the ould studdy of the gate house chamber belonging or appertaining unto my said dwelling house. Item to my said son John goods etc. in my now dwelling house in the tenour and possession of one

1. Somerset House, *p.c.c.*, Harvey, 148.

2. See page 162.

1. Nicholas Shott  
Robert Shott's son  
1639  
2. The wife of Marie Elizabeth Shott's son  
3. The wife of David John Shott  
4. The first of Anne John Shott  
5. The wife of David John Shott about 56 years of age  
6. Ben a liberal gunpowder about 60 years an expert gunpowder  
7. Life time multitudes of important poor people of Southwark  
8. Anne proper charge for the cause of justice a prominent Christian  
9. The wife of Henry Mary Shott  
10. The wife of David Shott  
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100. The wife of David Shott





Richard Cover my tenant called Waterhouse situate in Linchmere particulars of which said goods now being in Waterhouse is inserted and specified in a certain paper being in a box which box is now in my said lodging chamber. Item I give to my said son John 12 pieces of pewter I mean 12 platters. Item to my said son John one paire of holland sheets and 2 pair of flaxen sheets of my second sorte of sheets. Item to my said son John my said lodging chamber and my said ould studdie to have hold and enjoy this chamber and studdie with the appurtenances unto the said John for and during the term only of four years from my natural decease fully to be complete and ended with full liberty of ingress egress and regress during the said term as well unto and from the kitchen and fire in the kitchen of my said dwelling house as from and into the said lodging chamber and studdie at the will and pleasure of my said son John upon every expedient and necessary occasion and my will is that my goods hereby mentioned should be given to my said son John should be set out for him and delivered unto him by my executor herein appointed with the help and direction of my overseers or by some of them. Item I give unto my 2 daughters that is to say Elizabeth Sandham and Jane Wakeford 10s. a peece. Item I give unto the now 3 children of my son Roger Shotter that is to say Roger Elizabeth and Anne my 3 grandchildren 50s. a peece to be employed for their best profit and commodities by their said father. Item I give unto my other 3 daughters Agnes Joan and Mary £103 a peece.

My loving friends William Yalden the elder of Lodsworth and R. Palmer of Liphook yeoman and my son in law John Wakeford overseers 6s. 8d. a peece.

John Shotter sole executor.

all controversies concerning the will to be settled by overseers with the help of Mathew Cobden of Haslemere.<sup>1</sup>

Signed and sealed in the presence of us

James Napper  
the mark of William Shotter."

1. Matthew Cobden lived in an old house known as "Town House," in Haslemere. He inherited it from his father in 1625.—*Bygone Haslemere*.

A Robert died in 1624 and is entered on the register as "Robert Shotter of Sholbred, the servant of Roger Shotter." This is more likely to have been the nephew of Roger than his elder brother.

"The ould studdie" is evidently the same as "the chamber in the gate-house," specially mentioned by Richard Shorye. It is unfortunate that all traces of the gate-house have en-



BRIDGE.

tirely disappeared. John, so frequently mentioned in the will, was Roger's youngest child and evidently his favourite. He died in 1656 and is mentioned as John Shotter of Bridge. Bridge is a beautiful old house built in herring-bone brick and beam with large chimneys and with many other very interesting features, situated on the other side of Lynchmere common on the extreme northern boundary of the Parish.<sup>1</sup>

1. Now the residence of Mr. D. M. Paul, J.P. For an account of Bridge see *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. LIV, p. 32.

There is a carved mantelpiece in the dining room bearing the inscription **R. S. — I. S.** 1631. These initials may refer to Roger Shotter and Jane Shotter his wife, John's father and mother, although at that date his mother had been dead some years. More likely the second initials refer to John himself and the panel is a record of the gift of the house from his father; or the initials of the father and son may have been carved for some other reason and the carving taken by John from the Gate House when he went to Bridge. Mr. P. M. Johnston says it is quite likely that the stonework of Bridge with its delicately tooled surface was brought from the then lately destroyed Priory Church of Shulbrede. Roger the eldest son, born in 1597, succeeded his father as tenant of Shulbrede. In 1649 he was churchwarden, in 1666 he married Elizabeth, but on his death in 1672 his name was entered in the register as Roger Shotter of Pitfold. His will does not exist.

One of the Cowdray deeds of 1646, seen by Sir William Burrel<sup>1</sup> before the fire, is an indenture between J. Egar of Lynchmere and E. Fielder of Troyer of the one part and Francis Viscount Montague of the other part, and shows there had been neglect in paying tithes. It runs thus:—

“Whereas by ancient custom used whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary the owners, tenants or possessors of the site of the dissolved Priory of Shulbrede in Sussex of the farm lands and demesne lands to the same belonging have yearly satisfied and paid to the owners, possessors of the rectory or parsonage impropriate of his chapel or church of Lynchmere the sum of 26s. 8d. by way of *modus decimandi* and full lieu and satisfaction of all manner of tithes, tenths, desmes, oblations and obventions whatsoever from time to time arising in, out of, or by reason of the said site of the said Priory and farm lands and demesnes belonging to the site until the said payment hath of late been neglected and omitted to be paid by the space of 39 years last past by Roger Shotter, farmer, of the said Francis Viscount Montague of the site, etc., which payment upon request of him, said Roger Shotter, made by the said J. Egar and E. Fielder he is willing to make according to ancient custom and usage, etc., etc.”

1. Burrel MSS., Brit. Mus.



Roger the younger migrated to Pitfold. In fact he built the house which is just over the county boundary in Surrey. Judging by the remains which still exist it must have been a large manor house, for the erection of which stones from the ruined Priory were obviously used. Seven or eight rooms were pulled down from the east side not long ago but there still



PITFOLD.

remain several large rooms and a fine staircase. All the paneling has unfortunately been taken away. Large eighteenth century windows have been put in the place of the original windows but the old roof and chimney stack, the delicately arched brick doorway, the immense stone walls enclosing the garden and the outer porch which bears the date 1669 are all original work.

Roger having established himself at Pitfold it is difficult to say whether any other member of the family succeeded to the tenancy of the Priory. His eldest son, John who was church-

warden in 1633 died before his father in 1659. So also did Henry who is described as a Haslemere mercer. (There is a Haslemere token struck by Henry in 1667).<sup>1</sup> Robert the youngest son died in 1690, but neither he nor any other member of the family subsequently are referred to in the register as "of Shulbrede Priory." A John Ellyat is so described in 1653, also John Boxall "of Shilbred" who married Ellyat's widow and died in 1669, and "widow Boxall of Shulbrede Priory" who died in 1673.

The Boxall family is frequently mentioned in the neighbourhood, more especially in Haslemere, where John Boxall, Secretary to Queen Mary, who died in 1570 held land. A group of cottages above Lynchmere Marsh is still known as Boxhall's. The Boxalls were cousins of the Shotters, two of the sisters of Roger the elder, having married respectively Richard Boxall and John Boxall. Richard's will<sup>2</sup> (1635) shows that he held land in Lynchmere and Fernhurst. His property must have extended to the county boundary as on September 6th, 1616, forty inhabitants of Haslemere and the neighbourhood sent a letter to Sir G. More, Lord of the manor of Godalming, complaining that some two years' back John Misselbroke had altered the course of the stream called Houndley's Water (now known as Houndless Water), near Carpenter's Heath, where it formed the county boundary and that Richard Boxall of Linchmere, in Sussex, had kept up the diversion.<sup>3</sup>

Richard Boxall's generosity to the poor was referred to in the register when he died, thus :—

"The cherising father of the poore of Lynchmore who gave in his will 10 pounds the use thereof to be and remain to the use of the poore."

Members of the Boxall family were evidently resident in the Priory for a while. But the Shotter connection may have gone on. On an oak beam, which forms the lintel of one of

1. "Bygone Haslemere," p. 165.

2. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. XIX, p. 36.

3. Victoria "History of Surrey."

the bedroom doors in the Priory, the inscription **E. S. 1717** is carefully cut. This may be the initials of one of the innumerable Elizabeth Shotters. Unfortunately the page of births in the register for that year is destroyed, so it is impossible to say which Elizabeth it may have been. William Shotter "of Lynchmere," nephew of Roger the younger, appears to have been a comparatively rich man. He died in 1707 and left by his will as much as £300 a piece to his children. A large tomb marks his grave close to the south porch of the church. Next to it is the tomb of Elizabeth the wife of John Shotter, son of William the iron master of North Park, but the date of her death is effaced. There is, of course, no particular reason why the Shotters should have continued to reside at the Priory as they were tenants not owners. Several generations, however, undoubtedly did and the fact that the description "of Shulbrede Priory" ceases in the register is no proof that the Shotters had left. It simply ceased to be the practice to put any place name after the surname in the register.

The manorial court rolls, however, throw some light on the later generations of Shotters in the eighteenth century who continue to be to the fore as residents in the district up to the end of that century, one or more members of the family always attending the manorial court. As they are nearly all called Roger or John it is practically impossible to trace their relationship with any accuracy. The successive Johns are described as "John Shotter of Bridge" and "John Shotter of Highbuilding." There are a series of four or five Rogers and it is with these latter that Shulbrede Farm may have been connected. The holding known as "Lynchmeres," generally in conjunction with "Wattmans and Elliots," passes from Roger and Anne to their son Roger in 1743, to his son Roger in 1762. It then becomes separated from Wattmans and Elliots, which latter goes to John Shotter of Highbuilding in 1780, Roger being described in that year as Roger Shotter of Guildford. This only proves that these Shotters were holders of land in Lynchmere, not that they occupied the Priory.



In 1771, however, I have found that William Stenning the elder is described in his will<sup>1</sup> as being "of Shulbred." This is the only direct evidence of a resident during the eighteenth century which can be discovered. How soon the Stennings came to the Priory I cannot say. An Edward Stenning occurs in the register early in the century. He had two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, who married respectively in 1720 and 1725. It is conceivable that the carved initials **E. S.** 1717, already mentioned, may refer to Edward or his daughter. William seems to have been well off and had four sons, William, John, Edward and Richard. But we cannot say if any of them continued to reside in the Priory.

In 1774 the holding already referred to, known as Lynchmeres, passed into the hands of the Rapley family, who are even more confusing than the Shotters because they are nearly all called Edward. There is a link with the Stennings in the fact that William Rapley married Anne Stenning in 1725.<sup>2</sup> In 1788, according to the Court Rolls, Edward Rapley surrendered Linchmeres, etc., to James Coleman of Haslemere, and the transfer is mentioned in 1791 in the Feet of Fines, thus :<sup>3</sup>—

James Colman, plaintiff, and Edward Rapley the elder and Sarah his wife, and Edward Rapley the younger deforciant. Tenements in Linchmere and rectory of Linchmere alias Linchmore and Likewise the tenth or tithe of 26s. 8d. to be paid for or by way of modus in lieu of all other tithes, oblations and obventions whatsoever arising from the site farm charges and demesne of Shulbred alias Shulbrede quit claimed to plaintiff.

If this is read in conjunction with the indenture of 1646, quoted above on page 139, which showed that this precise sum of money was due then from Roger Shotter, who was then in

1. Probate Reg. Chich., vol. XLII, 221.

2. Sussex Marriage Licences.—*Sussex Record Society*, vol. IX.

3. *Sussex Record Society*, vol. XIX. The Feet of Fines simply record the conveyance of land. The "deforciant" was the freeholder, the "plaintiff" the purchaser.

possession of the Priory, it would seem that the Rapleys may have been in possession of the actual Priory buildings. But there is no evidence to support this in Rapley wills or other documents. The Rapleys figure prominently in the Lynchmere records as will be seen later. The holding above mentioned next passed to the Bakers. The surrender in the Court Rolls describes the transaction as having taken place in 1801 between Edward Rapley and Sarah his wife (who still seem to be in possession, no mention being made of Coleman) to Richard Henry Baker (a minor), one of the sons of James Baker of Stilland in North Chapel, who was admitted to the holding at the court in 1803 with James Baker as his guardian. James Freakes (who subsequently changed his name to Parson), of Stoke, and Viscount Montague were also parties to the surrender. In the Feet of Fines (1801) the transfer of the property is referred to thus :—

James Freakes, plaintiff, and James Baker and Anne his wife deforciant. Tenements in Linchmere and rectory of Linchmere alias Linchmore and all tithes, oblations, portions and pensions whatsoever to be paid for and by way of a modus in lieu of all other tithes, oblations and obventions whatsoever arising from the site, farm, charges and demesnes of the priory of Shulbrede alias Shulbred quit claimed to plaintiff and heirs.

This is a little confusing as regards the people mentioned, but the manorial Court Rolls are elaborately clear and there is no doubt that Richard Henry Baker came into possession. He became subsequently as will be seen Vicar of Lynchmere. Meanwhile the Shotters seem to have left the district and after 1805, when a James Shotter is mentioned in the rolls, the name does not occur again. Although they literally swarmed in the district the two previous centuries the name is but little known to-day.

After the gate-house was demolished the Priory may have ceased to be a residence worthy of yeoman farmers and became a house for a working farmer. In the sixteenth century and the nineteenth century we know of actual residents, but in the later half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth



THE CELLAGE OR MONKS' VAULT

(From Rouse's "Beauties of Sussex," 1825)





century there is only direct evidence of one actual occupant of the Priory. Towards the end of the nineteenth century rooms in the farm-house were habitually let to visitors during the summer months. By this means the fame of the secluded old ruin began to spread.

*Residents in the Priory after the Dissolution.*

John Todman	. . .	before 1551.
Widow Todman	. . .	1551 to 1555.
Perter Thecstone	. . .	before 1560.
Richard Shorye	. . .	before 1563 to 1588.
Roger Shotter	. . .	1588 to 1639.
Roger Shotter	. . .	1639. died 1672, of Pittfold.
John Ellyat	. . .	died 1653.
John Boxall	. . .	died 1669.
Widow Boxall	. . .	died 1673.

No direct evidence of anyone who lived in the Priory buildings until :

William Stenning	whose will is dated 1771.
Samuel Edwards	mentioned in 1819 and 1822. <sup>1</sup>
Thomas Chalcroft	} 1822—1862.
Edmund James <sup>2</sup> and subsequently his sons Edmund and Thomas James	
Frederick Redman	1862—1880.
Frederick Nield	1880—1891.
Marner Aylwin	1891—1901.

1. Lynchmere Poor Book.

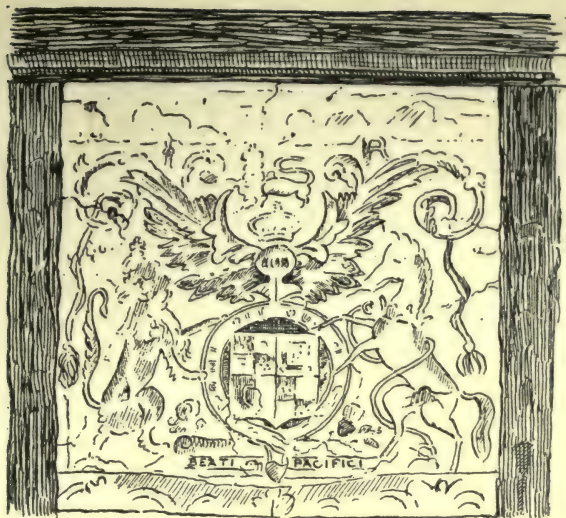
2. Vestryman and Churchwarden, Lynchmere Poor Book.

Nearly 350 years a Priory and over 350 years a farm-house, Shulbrede entered on the third stage of its existence at the beginning of the twentieth century when the house was converted into a private residence and the land, with the exception of the Priory meadow, detached and incorporated with Lower Lodge Farm, or merged into the Lynchmere House estate. After a brief interval during which the Priory was let to Mr. Gladwin Errington, who however never actually came into residence, the present occupants obtained the lease in 1902 and purchased the property in 1905.



THE STAIRCASE.





ARMS OF JAMES I  
(Wall-Painting in the Prior's Chamber)

## CHAPTER IX.

### Manorial Court.

**A**T the dissolution of the monasteries, when the Priory and its surrounding lands became incorporated in the Cowdray estate, they formed a part of the Manor of W'lenchmere and Shulbrede, and the Court Baron of the Lord of the manor (the owner of Cowdray for the time being) has been held in the Priory from that day to this. The Priory occupied the position of a manor house, and the Prior's Chamber is often described as the Court Room. Even when the Priory lately passed into private hands and no longer belonged to the Cowdray estate, a reservation had to be made, stipulating that manorial court should still be held within its walls, if necessary, once a year.

Village communities contained in the manorial system were organised as self-governing bodies. This was useful to the lord in many ways, but at the same time it curtailed his absolute power. Under the name "manorial court" three courts were included:—Court Leet, Court Baron and Customary Court. The lord was empowered by the Crown to hold a court of criminal jurisdiction, in which infringements of the common Law, not grave enough to be brought before the superior courts, were dealt with. This was the Court Leet or View of Frankpledge, and was held twice a year. The Court Baron and Customary Court, which soon became amalgamated, still sit for the receipt of customary dues from the tenants of the domain, and for the judgment of domestic cases with regard to trespass, debts, the cutting of timber, the use of water, the infringement of the rights over the common land, etc. The judgment comes from the whole court; and its suitors, without distinction of class, are judicial assessors, and form what is called "the homage." The court is composed of freeholders or copyholders, and cannot be held if there are not two or more of them. A copyholder is "tenant by the court roll, and is the only tenant in law which holds by the record of any deed or charter. The tithe or estate of the copyholder is entered into the roll whereof the steward delivered him a copy." He is also sometimes described as tenant by the rod—*par la verge*. This denomination is connected with the fact that in cases of succession, as well as in those of alienation, the holding passes by the ceremonial action of the steward or reeve of the manor handing a rod to the person who is to have the land. "The manor of Surrendrynge—To whom the steward shall say, take hym the yerde and he shall holde the one ende and the stewarde shall holde that other ende and shall say thus in full courte—I yield up my tenemente and land that is called ——— the which I hold of this lordshyp at the lordes wyll after the custom of this manor to the use of ——— and his heyres, etc."<sup>1</sup>

The late reeve of the manor has described to me how he

assisted from time to time in this ceremony. On the death of a tenant or on a surrender to his lord, a duty called "Heriot" is appropriated to the lord, and consists of the best beast or good found in possession of the tenant deceased or surrendering his holding—a primitive form of death duty. Originally, heriot was a tribute given to the lord for his better preparation towards war;—as a horse, a spear, a sword, or some other weapon. Heriot in nearly every case in the rolls of this manor is "the best beast." The exceptions are payments in money, "two best beasts," "two fat capons," "the best living beast and a hogg."

The Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede, of which unfortunately no maps exists, comprised holdings extending from the county boundary in the north to Fernhurst in the south. Adjoining it eastward was the Liberty of Lodsworth and southward was the Liberty of St. John.<sup>1</sup> A Liberty consisted of certain exemptions and privileges (such as freedom from market tolls to the King, from the sheriff's jurisdiction, from suit or service to any hundred court, etc.) which in the case of Lodsworth were granted by a Bishop of London, to whom the manor formerly belonged.<sup>2</sup> The knights of St. John of Jerusalem had a commandery of their order at Midhurst.

In quite early days the court of the manor might meet every three weeks, and could be called together without limit of time at the pleasure of the lord. Attendance was compulsory and absence subjected to a fine any tenant owing and refusing the service known as "suit of court." With a greatly reduced number of copyholders, and very little business to transact, the court of the Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede was latterly held at the most once a year. But the procedure is identical to that which has always obtained. Notice is first of all given of the holding of the court. To give a recent instance :—

"1904. MANOR OF LYNCHMERE AND SHULBREDE.

Notice is hereby given that a general Court Baron and customary court of The Right Honourable Augustus Arthur

1. Dallaway, W. Sussex, 290.

2. Horsefield's "History of Sussex," vol. II, p. 94.



Perceval, Earl of Egmont, Lord of the said manor, will be held in and for the said manor on Wednesday the second day of November next at 12.45 o'clock in the afternoon precisely at Shulbrede Priory, when and where all Persons owing suit and service claiming Admittance to any Hereditaments holden of the said manor, or having any other Business to transact at the said Court are required to attend."

(Date and signature of the Steward.)

The Court is held in the Prior's Chamber, the old Court Room. The steward presides, accompanied by a clerk. The reeve or bailiff, recently a woodman from Henley, who is the collector of services and in old days was the representative of the village interests, commences the proceedings by standing at the front door and calling out, just as if a large concourse of people were waiting in the fields outside :—

"Oyez, Oyez, All manner of persons that have anything to do at a general court Baron and Customary Court here about to be holden for the Manor of Linchmere and Shulbrede Priory draw nigh and give your attendance and you shall be heard."

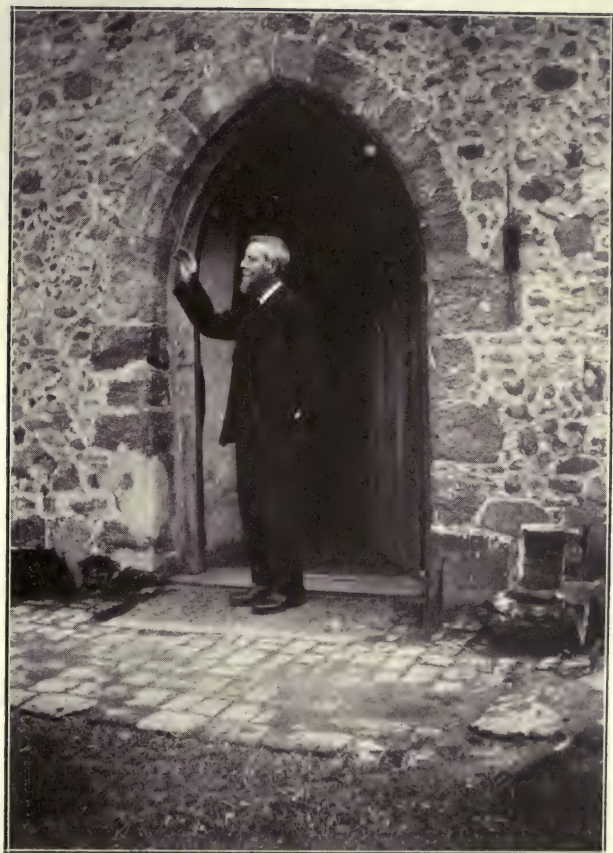
The homage is then sworn :—

"You shall inquire and true presentment make of all such things as shall be given you in charge. You shall present nothing out of hatred or malice nor shall conceal anything out of love, fear or affection, but in all things you shall well and truly present, as the same shall come to your knowledge.  
So help you God."

They then proceed to business, which does not occupy more than half an hour, and at the conclusion of the sitting the reeve goes once more down to the door and calls out :—

"Oyez, Oyez, All manner of persons have leave to depart hence, keeping their day and hour on a new summons."

Afterwards, those attending the Court have dinner at the Priory, which as will be seen was a privilege sought by them from the Lord in earlier days.



THE REEVE CALLING THE COURT BARON





I have in my possession the nine earliest existing court rolls which were discovered in the Lynchmere church chest. They are written (except in one case) in Latin on parchment and like all ancient deeds are far more indestructible than modern records which are printed and written on paper of very doubtful quality. With one exception they are in a good state of preservation. They date back to the reigns of Elizabeth and James I when Antony Viscount Montagu was Lord of the Manor. Unfortunately they do not chronicle any events of particular interest. Recitals in elaborate legal phraseology of the admission and surrender of holdings, fines and the entry of the death of tenants (apart from those already referred to in the previous chapter) do not throw much light on local history, and being incomplete are even from the genealogical point of view of little use.

The first of these rolls headed *Willenchn<sup>9</sup> Shelbredd* is dated April 28th, 13 Elizabeth (1570). As this is the earliest it is worth while giving the full list of tenants, fifteen of whom formed the homage the rest being mentioned in connection with holdings.

Walter Skyddmer (absent), Richard Farneden, John Collen, William Ede, John . . . . ler, John Bedell, Philip Shotter, William Boxall, George Bignall, William Grevett, John Cover, Roger Quenell, Robert Hopkyn, William Harwerd, John Bell, Richard Wakeforde, John Keye (died since last court, heriot a cow worth 26s. 8d.), Henry and Johanna Matthews and Elizabeth their daughter. Thomas Parson (died since last court, heriot a cow worth 26s. 8d.), Perat Parson (his widow *nuper relict*a), Thomas Hollywaye senior (deceased), Edena (his first wife), Johanna (his second wife), Thomas junior, Elizabeth Launder. Richard Farneden, who was the rector, pays 12 pence for improperly cutting down a beech tree.

With so many copyholders, court at the time was probably held at least once a year, the rolls are therefore not consecutive; the next one being dated 1579 headed "*Willenchnmere Shulbrede*." A valuable cow worth 33s. 4d. was paid as heriot on the death of William Ede. License was granted to Margaret, widow of Charles Pelham, to hold a tenement near

Shotovermill pending the minority of her son Blaise—6s. 8d. paid to the Lord of the manor as fine.

The third roll is dated the 8th of April, 1600. It is brief and deals only with transfers of holdings. The lower half of the roll concerns the court of the manor of Dockenfield, a small scattered village near Farnham, formerly in Hampshire but since 1895 in Surrey.

The next three rolls, headed *Linchmere Shulbread*, are on one parchment, written on the front and back, and are consecutive. The first of these is dated March 15th, 1613, and is very brief. The second, dated July 18th, 1614, is in the same handwriting but except for the preamble it is written in English. The name of Adrian Stoughton is given as steward of the manor. The record of the transactions at this court may be given in full :—

“ The homage do present that William Shotter hath felled downe since the last court day some thr . . . tymber trees of his coppiehold which he holdeth of the Lord called Peerish<sup>1</sup> and the same trees has employed upon the building of a new Barne on the same coppiehold for the receipt of his corn and grain thereof coming as it was noe more than needful for the old Barne is ruinous and not fitt to putt any corn in without spoil as the homage will avow.

And further the Homage do present that before the said trees were felled the said William Shotter procured from the Steward of this Court a warrant for the felling of the same as the homage will avow.

And further the Homage do present that it hath been a common custom of the same coppiehold and of all . . . of the said manor that everie tenant is to take sufficient timber from the same ground to mend and repair or otherwise to build sufficient roome for the housinge of his graine as the homage hopeth for to avow.

Item the hommage do present the Noble third Viscount Montagu and Thomas Gray, gent., for buildinge an Iron Mill on the above said coppiehold called Peerish and for makinge of highwaies through the said ground and for digging Myne pits and for makinge of san pitts and coale pitts to the great advantage of the Tennant to the same.”<sup>2</sup>

1. A holding referred to in later years as “ Parrys.”
2. See page 180.

Willelmus  
Schibress

Curia prebendalium antoni Macionem

Homagium

Homagium

Homagium

Homagium

Homagium

Homagium

Curia hinc





The third roll which is continued on the back of the parchment is in a different handwriting in Latin again. George Duncomb is the steward. It is dated March 7th, 1615.

A second court was held in the same year only a few weeks later, on March 22nd. Twenty-seven tenants are named and the homage consisted of fourteen of them. George Duncomb again is mentioned as the Seneschall or Steward. The lower end of this parchment has been rather seriously investigated by mice. The entries are quite trivial. Roger Quennell, tenant of Pophale, gets a licence to dig a trench across the upper Park Close. John Collen held property called Ricke Reynolds and Fridays. Succession to property at Hownleyswater (Houndlesswater, near Haslemere), on death of Alicia Bett. Robert Green and his wife are called upon to pay as rent one live hen, *una gallina viva*, annually at Cowdray House.

The next roll is written on the back of the parchment and is dated 1617. Certain tenants are declared to be in default with their dues, and are accordingly *in misericordia*. A certain Strudwicke and a certain Matt. John Petworth, without leave of the lord, took with nets and carried away partridges and pheasants in the manor. Fine 20s. Thomas Stede, who held a cottage near Midhurst, died. His rent was a fat capon per annum. At the time of his death he possessed a mare which was to be taken as heriot. Concession to William Stoneham of a piece of waste land (*quandam peciam vasti soli*) previously enclosed by the said William for the term of his life in copyhold rent, which was "a fat capon to be given at Cowdray House" at Easter every year. *Habet seisinam per virgam*. He did fealty and was excused payment of anything by special favour of the lord.

The last roll is a long parchment written on the front and back, dated March 21st, 1620. Thirty-one tenants are named and the homage consists of fourteen of them. It concerns for the most part the surrender of and admission to various holdings; a fine of 20s. from Elizabeth Stoneham who "on diverse days and diverse occasions since the last court was held, chased pigs from the pasture of the tenants on the common and shook down collected and carried away acorns growing on trees within this manor," and Roger Chawcroft is

fined because at various times he "overloaded the common with his cattle" (*superoneravit communiam cum averiis suis*).

There are no rolls in existence from 1620 to 1730. After the later date they are complete and are contained in volumes which I have been allowed to examine by the courtesy of the Lord and the Steward of the Manor. The volume containing the rolls from 1730 to 1844 is prefaced with the following note :—

The custom of this Manor is

For the eldest child to inherit as heir and that widows paying one penny fine to enjoy the copy hold lands and tenements within this manor for their chaste widowhood.

The first three are in Latin, after that only English is used. After the first few years it ceased to be the custom to give a full list of the tenants, and only the homage is entered, consisting in the early years of six or eight but latterly of only two or three people. The business is always the same; recitals of admissions and surrenders of holdings, declarations of the deaths of tenants and on some occasions quotations from their will; the receipts for fines are written in and signed in the margin. Court was held at intervals of a year, sometimes two or three years, and on very few occasions did a period of over three years elapse. Between 1773 and 1794 Court was held more frequently than once a year, for instance, in 1774 and in 1794 it was held no less than four times within the year. In 1741 there appears the following note at the end of the proceedings :—

At this court the homage present that the Lord of the Manor ought to pay ten shillings to the Homage for their attendance unless a dinner be provided for them.

This note recurs regularly till 1759 when apparently the Lord of the Manor yielded and the free dinner was given. My beef and apple tart to which they sat down in 1904 was duly paid for by the Steward.

There is one case of Court being held elsewhere than at the Priory. In 1809 it was held "at the house of John Clapshaw,





THE PRIOR'S CHAMBER.

being the sign of the blue anchor."<sup>1</sup> No doubt the dinner on that occasion was quite satisfactory.

Successive Viscounts Montague were Lords of the Manor till 1787. The seventh Viscount Anthony Joseph, who died in that year seems to have taken an interest in his courts. He writes in a letter, dated December 22nd, 1784, "You have never told me if Mr. Sandham had or intended to hold all my courts in the west before Christmas as I desired." In July, 1787, Sir John Webb and Sir Richard Bedenfeld,<sup>2</sup> Baronets, appear in the Court Rolls as Lords of the Manor. In October of the same year only Sir Richard Bedenfeld is mentioned. He continued as Lord of the Manor till 1791 when George Samuel, 8th Viscount, re-acquired his rights. When Lord Montague was drowned, in 1793, the title went to the last Viscount but the property to his sister. In 1794, therefore, Elizabeth Mary Browne, spinster, holds her court as Lady of the Manor. Two years later her husband, William Stephen Poyntz, joins her, and after her death in 1833 he appears alone. On his death in 1840 his three daughters, Frances wife of Sir H. Seymour Clinton, Elizabeth wife of the Hon. Frederick Spencer and Isabella wife of the Marquis of Exeter appear together with their husbands as Lords and Ladies of the Manor.

There is an interval in 1843 in which John Earl Brownlow and Sir William Heathcote, Baronet, appear as Lords of the Manor, and after this the Earls of Egmont succeed to the position. The present Lord of the Manor is Lord Cowdray's son, Major The Honourable Harold Pearson.

The rolls in this volume are most carefully written and it is only to be regretted that the earlier ones should have been destroyed in the Fire. By whom the nine I have in my possession were rescued I do not know. It would be possible, were it worth while, to trace the hands into which each holding

1. In Shottermill, still in possession of Clapshaw family in 1843 (Lynchmere rate book), now the Railway Tavern.

2. Sir Richard Bedenfeld is referred to in a letter from George Samuel Viscount Montagu, quoted p. 96.—Mrs. Roundell's *Cowdray*. He married Mary, daughter of Anthony Viscount Montague.



of the Manor passed successively but it would be a laborious task.

The chief holdings and tenements of the manor repeatedly mentioned in the Court rolls may be given from an early nineteenth century rent roll given to me by the late reeve of the Manor, Mr. Bulbeck :—

*Deane or Deane House	Mansers.
*Deane late Marshalls	Buckreeds and *Oakreeds.
Wattmans and Elliots	Redwater.
Shottover Fields	Chidhunt or Collyers.
*Springhead	Yonder Mead
*Watchers or Washers	*Stanley.
Shottover late Maidmans	*Danglely bottom.
*Pophole	Chithurst near Waterhouse.
Hogvogens	Waterhouse.
Pokemore	The Gates.
Little Red Water House	*Lucy's Garden.
*Tribes	Ricks Reynolds and Fridays.
Aldermash near Pitfold Hatch	Longcroft.
*Goldhocks	Selves.
Fishers	Bowcroft and Pitch.
Parrys and Hurlands	Lewknors.
*Linchmeres ( <i>i.e.</i> the Church	*Covers.
Farm)	*Moses Hill.
Cawsey End	

The Court was not held in the Prior's Chamber, when owing to the window tax (first imposed in 1647, levied at a higher rate towards the end of the eighteenth century and not repealed till 1851) the south window was blocked up; and in the early nineteenth century the room was only used as a store-room. The window in the adjoining room was also blocked up and there was no passage window, so this part of the house was quite dark and practically abandoned. During this period Court was held in the room adjoining the present dining room. Recently, however, Court was again held in the Prior's Chamber.

\* Still traceable under the same name.



There are now only five copyhold tenants on the court roll of Lynchmere and Shulbrede, and the old custom of holding a Court Baron is therefore not likely to survive many years.

#### STEWARDS OF THE MANOR.

Adrian Stoughton . . .	before	1614
George Duncomb . . .	.	1615 and 1620
John Alcock . . .	before	1730
Robert Searle . . .	.	1730
William Scutt . . .	.	1741
William Frogatt . . .	.	1767
William Sandham . . .	.	1771
William Budd . . .	.	1805
Richard Wardroper . . .	.	1828
The Rt. Hon. Spencer Horatio Walpole . . .	.	1843
Thomas Johnson . . .	.	1876
William T. Johnson . . .	since	1887



TILE.



LYNCHMERE CHURCH.

## CHAPTER X.

### Lynchmere.

**T**HE village was originally called Wlenchmere and the forms Woolynchmere, Willenchmere or Wallinchmere also occur. The name postulates an eleventh century form *Wlencesmere* (with a hard 'c'), *i.e.* the pool or lake of someone named *Wlaenc*. (In Shropshire Domesday Book there is a Walanceslau which indicates an O.E. *Wlaenceshlaew*—the gravemound of *Wlaenc*.) In O.E. *wlaenc* means 'proud'; *Wlaencing* means 'little proud one.' In the Saxon Chronicles one of the sons of Ælle, the first King of Sussex, was named *Wlencing*. *Mere* 'a pool' or 'a lake,' while it was a dissyllable, had a short 'e'; when it dropped its end vowel compensatory lengthening either occurred simultaneously or followed immediately, and it became *mēr* (*meer*). Lynchmere therefore does not indicate a wealden boundary, as

some have supposed. It is the mere or pool of Wlaences.<sup>1</sup> The initial 'W' occurred as late as 1799.<sup>2</sup> But it had no doubt long since ceased to be pronounced, like the 'w' in 'writing.'

The Priory and the village have been linked together very closely. No doubt before the dissolution the inhabitants of Lynchmere chiefly consisted of employees of the Priory. The old village, little more than a hamlet without post-office, shop or inn, lies buried in the northern hills of the weald and consists of groups of cottages clustering on the side of a very precipitous hill, at the top of which the little church stands looking out over one of the most lovely views in the south of England. "From the churchyard," says one who stayed in the Priory, "there is a divine view; firwoods in the foreground, beechwoods to the left, heather moors to the right and blue in the distance—the hills of Sussex and Hampshire. A beautiful spot to stay and muse in on a drowsy summer day, a blessed one to sleep in when time has met eternity."<sup>3</sup>

The parish comprises 2065 acres. In spite of the growth of Hammer in the northern part of the parish near Shottermill, and the modern development of Haslemere and Hindhead, the old village still remains very secluded, protected by its steep hill and the stretch of common on the north, where peat was still dug for fuel in the nineteenth century. The population of old Lynchmere remained fairly stationary during the nineteenth century at two or three hundred. But the lists in the earlier Court Rolls and the disappearance of some of the old cottages would seem to point to the fact that at one time it was more populous and, no doubt, in the flourishing days of the iron industry there were many more people resident in the district. Families may still be found bearing the same surnames as those which recur so frequently in the old court rolls and registers, such as Luffe, Chalcroft, Harding, Boxall, Enticknap, Cover, Quenell, Voller, Bignold; and it would not be difficult were the records complete to

1. From information supplied by Mr. Alfred Anscamb.

2. *Gentleman's Magazine*.

3. Mrs. Clifford, "Woodside Farm."



trace their descent. As Bishop Stubbs says: "Mere antiquity of descent is of course less significant than antiquity of famous descent; but there is as a matter of fact very little antiquity of famous descent in this or any other European country. And the mere antiquity in the male line means the continuity of dwelling and working, hereditary occupations and local connections which to those who possess it, ought never to be a matter of indifference." The old custom of families residing generation after generation in the same spot has practically come to an end in the twentieth century. Children when they grow up go far afield. The large towns attract them: easy conveyance scatters them. The restless spirit of a mechanical age has destroyed the quieter old-world habit of life. The aged inhabitants now in their declining years will be the last representatives of the old order which existed for many centuries.

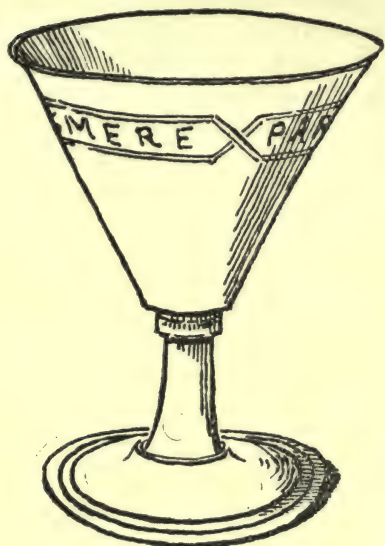
*St. Peter's Church.*

The situation of the church on the hill crest overlooking the valley has already been described. It is approached from the north by a road which passes at the side of a broad stretch of grass on which stands a line of very ancient oaks. Its foundation is earlier than that of the Priory. This can be proved architecturally but not by its mention in any records. There is no reference to it in Domesday but that is no proof that no church existed. Before the church was served by the Canons of Shulbrede it was under the patronage of the Abbey of Séez in Normandy.<sup>1</sup>

It is certain that before the close of the eleventh century a stone church was standing upon the present site and of this building the west wall and probably the foundations of the north and south walls still remain. The plain round-headed doorway in the west wall with its simply chamfered imposts is a relic of the Norman church. The main outlines of the building date from the thirteenth century. The broad lancet

1. See page 36.

in the south wall of the nave belongs to the later part of that century, and the three well-designed wide pointed openings in the south wall of the chancel, together with the remarkable plate tracery east window and the trefoil-headed piscina in the east wall. There is a beautifully moulded beam and truss standing at the entrance of the chancel of the same date. The little stone tower at the west end of the church has a sundial on its southern face bearing the date 1656. It rests upon



three small pointed arches springing from two tall but slender stone columns within the church.<sup>1</sup> Towards the end of the sixteenth century I find sums of money left by Lynchmere residents in their wills "for the reparation of the church." On a map of 1798 there is a small, though probably inaccurate, drawing of the church in which the tower is not surmounted by the oak shingle spire which now stands but the stone is crenellated and decorated with five weathercocks. The north aisle of the church was added in 1906.

There is a small silver chalice with paten cover belonging to the church, which dates back to Elizabethan times. It has a plain acutely-shaped bowl with a band of interlaced etched engraving in the panels of which is inscribed in rude lettering "For them of Lens Mere Parise." It has a plain round stem with a knob and joins the bowl and foot by a reed moulding. The height of the cup is only  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches. It belongs to the year 1567-8 and there are two other cups by the same workman at Selsey and Itchenor. It must have been

1. From a description drawn up by Philip M. Johnston.

presented by some resident in the parish and it is not impossible that Roger Shotter the elder, who mentions his "lesser silver cup" in his will<sup>1</sup> in 1635, may have been the donor. A former vicar about a hundred years ago, gossip says, parted with this cup in payment of his debts. It has quite recently been recovered from the family in whose possession it remained in the interval.

Until the middle of the nineteenth century the benefice was a perpetual curacy united with Fernhurst.

The Church Register begins in 1550 but the first few pages are badly damaged and it does not become properly legible till 1570. Between 1600 and 1640 the writing is very neat and tidy. Edward Clavelshay was the vicar at that time. He seems to have taken a pride in keeping a careful register during more than forty years and signs his name very frequently. In 1623 there is inserted "a particular of the churchyard Pannell rails to whom they do belong and by whom to be repaired made on the 4th of January 1623." Then comes a list of about twenty names including "Roger Shotter junior one pannell rail," and "Antony Viscount Montagu two pannell railles for lands lieing in the North Park." The word pannell simply means the section or compartment of a fence. Similar provisions for the upkeep of the church fence are not uncommon in other parishes. Each property holder was assessed at so many rails and the sections could be recognised by double posts between each group of rails.

The pages of the register are not in their proper order, owing to the fact that the register was written on loose sheets of parchment folded into two or four and subsequently bound together. In 1660 the reason is given for continuing on a different page "because there is no parchment." After 1700 several pages have been destroyed.

The next volume of the register, which begins in 1730, is a great contrast in the rough untidy way it is kept to the earlier volume which contains Clavelshay's scholarly and beautiful writing.

1. See page 136.



LIST OF INCUMBENTS OF ST. PETER'S, LYNCHMERE,  
FROM 1537.

GEORGE WALDERN.

Curat. Last Prior of Shulbrede, witness to Rychard Bettesworth's will in 1540 and Robert Shotter's will in 1544.

THOMAS RICHARDSON.

Curat. Witness to John Todman's will in 1551 and Nicholas Hopkyn's will in 1557.

ROBERT BROWNRYG.

Curat. Witness to Perter Thecstone's will in Feb. 1560.

JOHN BACHIELER.

Curat. Witness to John Broweman's will July 1560.

JOHN COLPAS.

Curat. Witness to Thomas Pereson's and James Eston's will in 1570.

RICHARD FARNDEN.

Rector of the parish of Lynchmere: will dated 1577 in which he leaves land called Firfolde or Farfolde in Haslemere to his sons, Richard and George, bedding to his daughter Thomasyn and a yoke of oxen to his son Thomas.

JOHN ELLICE.

Curat. Witness to widow Collin's will in 1580.

EDWARD POLLARD.

Curat. Witness to Idene Shotter's will in 1587.

JOHN BENNETT.

Curat. Signs the register in 1598.

EDWARD CLAVELSHAY.

Curat. Signs his name frequently in the register from 1623 onwards; gives a list of those responsible for the upkeep of the churchyard panel rails and a list of the collectors of the army tax and signs Protestation return in 1641. Died 1644.

MR. COOKE.

Note in the register stating he came "to serve the cure at Lynchmore" in succession to Clavelshay in 1645 and was succeeded by

EDWARD RIGGES,

Minister, who is mentioned several times in the register between 1646 and 1669 when he died.

JOHN BRADSHAW.

Curate. Signs return in parish register transcripts in 1672 and 1677; mentioned in the register as having died in 1679.

HABELL STEPNEY, M.A.

Licence to the curacy dated 1681.

THOMAS ANDREWES.

Curate. Signs returns in parish register transcripts in 1713.

THEOP. HOOK.

Curate. Signs returns in parish register transcripts in 1715.

THOMAS SWALLOW.

Minister. Signs returns in parish register transcripts in 1716.

JOHN VENEER, B.A.

Curate. Date of licence to curacy 1719; mentioned in a deed by which Edward Rapley made gift of £10 a year from Lynchmere tithes for the benefit of the curate in 1735.

JAMES BAILEY.

Minister. Signs returns in parish register transcripts 1750-1756 and the church register in 1755.

THOMAS MONKHOUSE.

Curate. Signs register in 1759 and returns in parish register transcripts 1758-1762.

TEMPLE HENRY CROKER, B.A.

Date of licence to curacy 1758. Signs register in 1764.

JOHN YALDWYN.

Curate. Signs returns in parish register transcripts 1769-1773.

JAMES FIELDING

1777-1801.

Curate. Signs register and a book for the marriage register is a gift from him. He held the benefice of Cranley in 1765 and was appointed curate in Haslemere in 1772. He held a considerable amount of land and resided at one time in Town House in High Street also at "Chase" just over the

boundary in Sussex. In 1802 he ceases to sign the Lynchmere register. In 1806 he resigned the Rectory of Cranley and the Vicarage of Womersley to which he had been appointed by Lord Grantley. He built a house called Denbigh now known as Lyth Hill and settled down there till he died in 1817 at the age of 77. He was buried in a vault in Haslemere Churchyard in a coffin without plate or name.<sup>1</sup>

In a pamphlet entitled "Of Bygone Haslemere, Told by two K's" there is the following reference to Fielding: "When the coach was robbed on the Portsmouth road by Parson Fielding and others he is said to have brought the mailbags and the money to his house in High Street and to have hidden them in the cellar. The bags were found there<sup>2</sup> and it was said that a lady in pink was wont to appear there also, but whether she came after the money bags or was connected with any other of Parson Fielding's ill doings I never heard. This is the man whose daughter being dead built a large family vault in the churchyard and while it was being prepared for his daughter's burial went down into it and danced saying it would make an excellent ball-room. He would have no headstone put up nor any name plates on the coffins and the place is unmarked save that, they say, the grass will not grow over it."

Perhaps Fielding was responsible for the disappearance of the Lynchmere chalice.

THOMAS DENNIS.

Signs the register as "Minister," 1802.

JAMES PARSON, B.A.

Signs the register first as "curate" then as "Minister," 1805-1820. Originally James Freakes, he came from Stilland in the parish of North Chapel and changed his name to Parson (which was his mother's name). He married Sarah daughter of James and Anne Baker, and died 1827. He was also curate of Haslemere.

P. B. BEATH.

Signs the register as curate 1806-7.

RICHARD HENRY BAKER.

Curate and afterwards vicar, 1809. Also curate of Haslemere. Son of James Baker and Anne, daughter of James Coleman, and a considerable land owner. (See p. 169.)

1. "The Curates of Haslemere," by J. W. Penfold, *Haslemere Parish Magazine*, May, 1896.

2. Now in the Museum.



## Lynchmere

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WILLIAM HENRY PARSON, M.A.

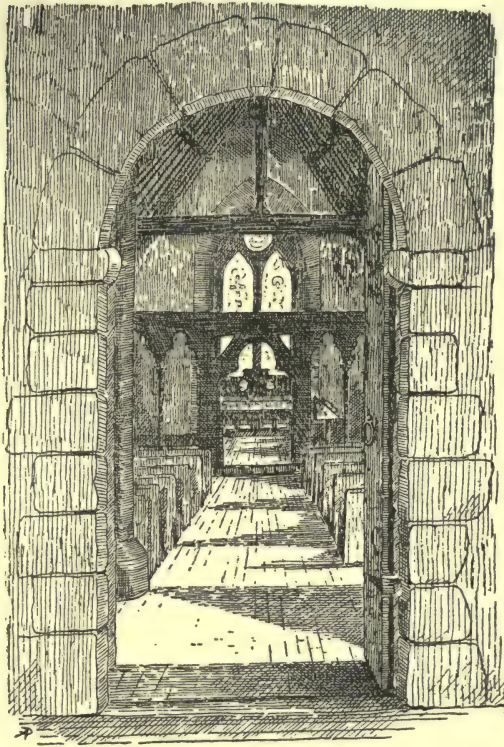
1849.

Son of James Parson.

W. H. ONSLOW PARSON, M.A.

1882.

Son of the above. First occupant of the new vicarage.



INTERIOR OF LYNCHMERE CHURCH.

JAMES DAVIDSON, B.A. Now Archdeacon of Bermuda. 1903.

FRANK J. EVANS, M.A. 1906.

DUNCAN PEARCE, M.A. 1918.

*Landowners in Lynchmere.*

There are isolated entries in various records concerning landowners in Lynchmere but nothing specific with regard to the actual situation of the properties nor anything consecutive showing the transfer of the land through a series of hands.<sup>1</sup>

Brian and Gunnora, as already noted, held land in Lynchmere in the twelfth century. From them Ralph de Arderne, the founder of the Priory, purchased something like 200 acres before the year 1200. But before this Savaric Fitzcana, of Midhurst, had been granted Lynchmere among other estates by a charter of Henry I and in his dispute with Ralph de Arderne his Sussex estates were transferred to Ralph. The Priory lands which probably comprised a good part of Lynchmere passed from the Ardernes to the Percies of Petworth, afterwards earls of Northumberland, and after the dissolution, as we have seen, passed to the Montagues, the Poyntzes, and subsequently the Egmonts and Viscount Cowdray, who as owners of Cowdray were lords of the manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede, although there appear to have been one or two breaks in the exercise of manorial rights.

But in spite of the above mentioned lawsuit the Bohuns of Midhurst must still have held lands in Lynchmere, for in 1254<sup>2</sup> William de Raunvil was granted "two parts of a virgate of land in Wlenchmere" by Francis de Bohun. Another isolated entry in 1345<sup>3</sup> shows that Archbishop Winchelsey held land in Wlenchmere which may account for the unusual occurrence of his conducting a visitation at Shulbrede some years before, instead of the Bishop of Chichester.

In 1574<sup>4</sup> the rectorial tithes were transferred from Thomas Wyseman and Anne his wife to Thomas Bettsworth. They are described as "rectory or chapel of Lenchemore and 1 mess: 1 barn and 2 acres of land also all tithes and oblations in

1. Dallaway's statement that Lynchmere is mentioned in Domesday is incorrect.

2. *Feet of Fines*, 38 Henry III.

3. *Inq. post mortem*, 1345.

4. *Feet of Fines*, 16 Elizabeth.

Lenchemore," and again in 1596 they are transferred from Peter Bettsworth and Eleanor his wife to Stephen Terry.

The holding called "Lynchmeres" which comprised the church farm was held successively from about 1570 by the Mathews, Piersons, Shotters and Rapleys. Reference has already been made to the Rapleys and Bakers in this connection. The Rapleys were very prominent in Lynchmere between the middle of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. They probably came from Warnham where many members of the family lived from the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Almost without a break an Edward Rapley appears in the homage of the court between 1747 and 1801. I have not attempted to trace the ramifications of this family which, judging by the register, was very large. The Edward Rapley who died in 1651 was a yeoman who held land "adjoining the Churchyard," probably the church farm. He had a large number of children. There was an Edward Rapley who died in 1690 and who is entered in the hearth tax assessment as not having paid for "a void house six hearths." Both these left wills of no particular interest. In 1735 another Edward gave £10 a year from Lynchmere tithes for the benefit of the rector of Lynchmere. Yet another Edward Rapley is mentioned as churchwarden in 1785 and was in possession of the property which included the church farm and other holdings. As late as 1820 the name Edward Rapley occurs in the register but there is no Edward Rapley in Lynchmere to-day.

The Bakers are far simpler; there are only two. James Baker of Stilland, in Northchapel, who came into the district and represented his son at the Court in 1801 when Edward Rapley surrendered certain holdings. In 1803 the son, Richard Henry Baker, was of age and himself took possession. The map dated 1798 now at Lynchmere House shows the Church Farm, which comprised the greater part of old Lynchmere, as the property of Richard Henry Baker. He subsequently became Vicar of Lynchmere. He died in 1849 and

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XXXIII, p. 186.



is said to have been owner of all the land between Lynchmere and Haslemere station. The property then passed to the Parson family, James Parson having married a Baker. Three members of the family were vicars of Lynchmere. The property was no longer held as copyhold but bought outright, and afterwards it was acquired by Frederick Pratt Barlow, and further enlarged out of the Cowdray estate by his brother, Frank Pratt Barlow. Mrs. F. Pratt Barlow, widow of the last named, is the present owner and the living is in her gift. Lynchmere house, originally a farm house connected no doubt with Lynchmere farm which lies on the other side of the church, became the rectory until 1882 when the vicarage further down the hill, a remarkable example of the sort of architecture which is favoured by the ecclesiastical commissioners, was built.

*Residents in the Village.*

A list of Lynchmere tenants and residents has already been given out of the Court Roll of 1570. Another may be given in the middle of the following century.

The House of Commons passed a resolution in 1641 declaring *inter alia* "That what person soever shall not take the Protestation is unfit to have office in the Church or Commonwealth." Returns were accordingly sent to parliament from all parishes and they contain the names of all males aged eighteen and upwards whether householders or not. First of all the minister, churchwardens and overseers sent in their names.

Lynchmere. Edward Clavell,<sup>1</sup> clerk.

John Collin	}	Churchwardens.
Thomas Pullen		

Tho. Fanchen	}	Overseers of the Poore.
Edward Wood		

The parishioners having received a warning attended at the church and took the protestation there.

1. Curiously enough Clavelshay wrote his name like this on one or two occasions.

*Lynchmore in Coun. Sussex. Memorandum that the Inhabitants of the Parish of Lynchmore whose names are hereunder written, have taken this ensuing Protestation in the Presence of the Minister, Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poore of the same parish the 20th day of February, 1641.*

Here follows the protestation which begins :—

I, A. B. do in the presence of Almighty God, Promise, Vow and Protest, to maintain and defend as far as lawfully I may with my life, power and estate, the true Reformed Protestant Religion, expressed in the doctrines of the church of England against all Popery and Popish Innovations within this realm, etc., etc.

Thomas Quinnell	Henry Bacon	James Wattes
Thomas Cover	John Farundon	Thomas Luffe
*John Brydins	*Richard Michene	Peter Ede
*Charles Bryday	Henry Lanaway	Thomas Boll
*Robert Shotter	Thomas Houd	Thomas Bodging
*Roger Shotter	George Stemp	Peter Haythorne
*Robt. Woodman	George Willard	John Howes
Richard Bristow	Richard Marchell	Nicholas Sted
*Willm Mose	*John Shotter	William Cover
*Edward Rapley	Wat Dudman	Richard Hogsflesh
*Thomas Overington	John Chalcroft	Richard Marnt
*William Bredaw	*John Quennell	Willm Hayward
Henry Lanaway	*Thomas Jarlett	John Chelsam
Willm Bridge	*Nicholas Stonham	*James Quennell
William Deane	*Roger Seal	Robert Elridge
Willm Stonham	Henry Pomell	Thomas Beary
William Stockdeane	Richard Barden	Lawrence Betsworth
Roger White	Roger Qennell	David Strudweek
Thomas Luffe	Willm Shotter	Roger Cover
Charles Strudwike	Thomas Rapley	*Thomas Ayling.

\* These seventeen sign their names ; the rest make their mark.

The names of such as absent and from hoame whereby they did not subscribe to this Protestation : Thomas Scale, Peter Hogsflesh, John Morgan, Thomas Stonham.

*(The following is crossed out.)*

Thomas Ailing a Popish recusant, absent and hath not soe taken his Protestation being an inhabitant of Lynchmere aforesaid.

As this is crossed out Ayling must have been persuaded to sign. But in 1654, when his wife died, Clavelshay describes him in the register as "a papiste."

In the poll for knights of the Shire in 1705 the only freeholder voting in Lynchmore was John Wilham. But with regard to his family I have made no discoveries.

After the Shotters and Rapleys, the Bettsworths or Bettysworths, the Covers and the Luffes seem to have been the most notable Lynchmere residents.

The earliest discoverable Lynchmere will is that of Richard Bettsworth, dated 1540.<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to decipher but it may be given in full except for a few words:—

"I Rychard Bettysworth hole of mynde and memory make my testament and last wyll in form following—

I wyll my solle to God and ye Lady Saynt Mary and to all the holy company of heven and my body to be buried in the churchyard of Lynchmere. Item I wyll to ye mother church of Chichester II*d.* to four of my god-children each of them IV*d.* to Wyllam West a sleveless cote to John Hose a jacket to ye church of Lynchmere a torche ye price of Xs. Item I wyll hit may burne yerly whyll it may on ye sint James's day the hole masses time. Item to William Ede IV*d.* to George Walldren XII*d.* to my youngest children each of them XXs. if any of them do die I wyll hit that . . . money to the other whych do longest . . . the rest my wife and Thomas my son whom I make my executor to bury my body and pay my detts and to se that my last wyll wd be fulfilled. Item I wyll to John Colpas to be my overseer. wytness George Waldern curat, William Ede, John Colpas."

The chief interest in this will lies in the reference to George Waldern, who was the last Prior of Shulbrede, as it shows he became rector of Lynchmere, the canons having been expelled from the Priory only three years before this will was drawn up. There are many other members of the Bettsworth family who seem to have been very well to do. Alice in 1597 leaves a bedstead, a feather bed, a kettle, a pottinger, etc., as well as cattle. There was an Arthur Bettsworth who signs the

1. Probate Reg. Chich., II, 196.



register as overseer in 1653 and the name occurs frequently in the register of Linch during the eighteenth century, Peter Bettsworth as already noted having been the churchwarden when the church was rebuilt in 1700. There is a Lynchmere Bettsworth who was a J.P. in 1778.

Another early will is that of Thomas Wodiar, 1543,<sup>1</sup> who desired to be buried in "the churchyard of Welenchmere Priory" and left to "the church of Lynchmere a shepe." The Priory had been dissolved six years before and it would appear very doubtful if burials were permitted in the graveyard of the Priory Chapel. Wodiar may have been an old Priory servant. In 1580<sup>2</sup> Widow Collins leaves in her will an immense variety of goods including "a table with a form thereto," "a malting vault," "a horse and cart with a pair of wheels," "a bedstead with painted cloths hanging about the same," "little brass pot, kettle, a pewter platter," "two blankets, a holster," "a quart of purified honey," "best bed, best blanquettes, two sheets, 2 hams," "my lesser cauldron," "two of my best pewter platters and wooden platters," "one heifer, two ewes," "bed hangings of buckram," "a sowe and my best tablecloth," "a pullet," "a quart of honey and grease," and "all my wearing apparel and all my linen." Where this opulent lady lived is not mentioned.

The first group of old cottages on the right-hand side, ascending Lynchmere Hill, is known as Covers. They were originally one house built in stone, probably taken from the ruined Priory, and some of the beams in the interior show they have been used for some other structure. The name Cover occurs very frequently in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Old "John Cover" pear trees adorn the gardens of several Lynchmere cottages. The first discoverable Cover is John, "housboundman," who, in his will dated April 4th, 1555,<sup>3</sup> desired to be buried "within the churchyard of Saynt Peter in Lynchmere nigh unto my friends there already tumulated."

1. Probate Reg. Chich., II, 241.

2. Probate Reg. Chich., XII, 186.

3. Probate Reg. Chich., VIII, 139.

This curious expression is also used by Nicholas Hopkyn whose will is dated 1557.<sup>1</sup> John the son of John Cover, in 1590, bequeathed to his relations six pewter dishes, a candlestick, a salt cellar and cheese, as well as bedding. A Richard Cover



COVERS.

was in possession of Waterhouse which had been held by his mother, as appears from the Court Roll of 1617; but in 1639 Roger Shotter left this property to his son John, in whose family it remained during the eighteenth century. There is no place known as Waterhouse to-day though it may well

1. Probate Reg. Chich., VIII, 237.

have been a cottage which lies close to the pond on the marsh. "Little red water house being in Lynchmere marsh" is a description which occurs in the will of Robert Luffe in 1707,<sup>1</sup> a descendant of the Robert Luffe who was one of the witnesses to Richard Shorye's will in 1587. This eighteenth century Luffe left some good furniture including "a joyned chest, a bed, a chest of drawers with straight legs, a dresser, a warming pan, a round table, and irons, a fire shovel, tongs and two joyned stools." Anne Luffe, when she died about 1771, held "Lucy's Garden of the Manor of Lynchmere and Shulbrede," a holding which has now disappeared but which lay between the Ridge and Hammer. The last of the Luffes of Lynchmere was Meshak who for many years farmed the church farm and in his old age lived in Stanley cottages, opposite Covers. His brothers Shadrak and Abednego left the district but he lived in Lynchmere all his life and died quite recently in 1919.

Other Lynchmere wills I have examined of Gobble, Court-nages, Edes, Chilsams, Quennells, etc., do not yield anything of interest. Oliver Chitty, in 1605, seems to have had a good many possessions; he leaves "a great kettle, a pottinger, a little stabine (or scabine) and a brass pot." Nicholas Hardinge makes his will in 1557 and Thomas Harding to-day is a churchwarden and one of the last copyholders of the Manor. There is a Madgwick will in 1769 and there are Madgwicks in Lynchmere to-day residing at the foot of Lynchmere Hill, close to the track which was once the road to Woodman's Green. Further along this track, deep in the wood and very romantically situated, is an old cottage known as Newlands. A holding of that name formed part of the possessions of the Priory at the time of the dissolution. The old family names, as I have said already, are now dying out and when the last generation has passed the inhabitants of to-day will be gone to-morrow.

A few old cottages and houses, solidly built in stone and brick, are still standing in the extreme north of the parish near Shottermill and along the county boundary. Bridge has

1. Probate Reg. Chich., XLII, 207.

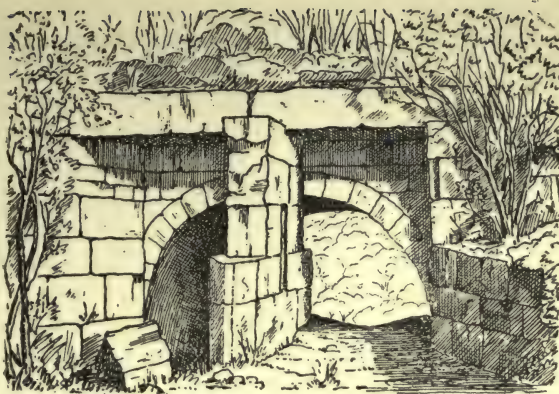


already been referred to and not far from it is an attractive old farmhouse overlooking the common, known as Gilhams. Christopher Gilham is mentioned in the register in 1609.

Stanley farm, formerly the residence of the Butlers, lies high up in the extreme west of the parish on the edge of the common. Close by there is a gate leading into what is now the Hollycombe estate the property of Mr. J. C. Hawkshaw. At the side of this gate there is a stone, on three sides of which the following inscriptions are cut: I. M. 1679 . R. S. 1791 . R. L. 1802. I have been unable to discover what these initials and dates mean. They may refer to the owners of a holding of which this stone marks the boundary. If I had to make a guess at the names referred to I should say they were John Maidman, Roger Shotter and Richard Luffe, but the dates do not coincide with any of the entries with regard to Stanleys in the Court Rolls. So this mystery must remain unsolved. In the valley further north there was another remote farm and holding, known as Danley bottom, the house of which has been converted into cottages. Passing on towards Liphook a wanderer may espy under a clump of hollies on the common a peculiar looking conical tent out of the top of which smoke emerges. This has been the residence winter and summer of a tinker knifegrinder and his wife for the last thirty years. He is a well-known figure in the district and may be seen driving along with his machine on his cart. He never mentions the local J.P. or the vicar without touching his hat.

Many of these outlying houses can only be reached by rough tracks through the woods or over the common, and in the Sussex side of the Parish some are entirely concealed by the trees.

The rapid modern growth of Hammer, which lies within the parish a mile or more to the north from the church over the common, has not interfered with the little old village of Lynchmere which still remains scattered and isolated in the woodland hills. If only these old houses could speak they would be able to tell many an interesting tale, and fill some of the blanks in the very incomplete records I have been able to unearth.



REMAINS OF NORTH PARK IRON MILL.

## CHAPTER XI.

### Iron Furnaces in the neighbourhood.

**W**ITHOUT entering too fully into the history of iron founding in Sussex and over the border in Surrey, as many interesting papers on the subject have appeared elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> some reference must be made to it owing to the fact that within five miles of Shulbrede no less than four iron mills were working for many years.

The industry in Sussex dates back from Roman times and although there is no mention of it in Domesday there can be no doubt that it was carried on uninterruptedly till the beginning of the nineteenth century. The first mention of it occurs in the middle of the thirteenth century in the reign of Henry III; it increased considerably during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and reached its greatest extent in the

1. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*—Mark Antony Lower, vol. II and vol. XVIII; J. L. Parsons, vol. XXII, and Charles Dawson, vol. XLVI. "Bygone Haslemere," chap. XIII; Victoria History of Sussex, vol. II.

seventeenth century. The discovery of the way to use mineral coal for iron smelting produced severe competition in the north and west of England so that during the eighteenth century the number of Sussex iron works rapidly decreased. The last furnace at Ashburnham was put out in 1822.

The iron ore was produced by the wealden formation, which is composed of ferruginous clays and sands, formed by vegetable and animal decomposition. In choosing sites for the works the iron masters sought spots which were at once contiguous to the beds of ore and to some convenient water power. Great dams of earth were thrown across the streams with an outlet of masonry for the supply of water by means of which the wheel connected with the machinery of the hammer and the furnace bellows was set in motion.

John Norden, in his *Surveyors' Dialogue* (1607), states that : " There are or lately were in Sussex neere 140 hammers and furnaces for iron . . . but they work not all the year for many of them lack water in the summer to blow their bellows."

A list drawn up in 1653 gives twenty-seven furnaces and forty-two forges or iron mills in Sussex but by 1664 many of these were out of use owing to " the unlimited importation of Forraigne Iron."

As the furnaces were fed entirely by wood the destruction of timber became excessive and it was feared that the supplies of oak from Sussex for shipbuilding would be stopped. It was reported, for instance, by the Commission appointed in 1548-9, that every iron mill took yearly at least 1500 loads of great wood. There was no systematic replanting and the denudation of the forests was serious. In the time of Queen Elizabeth, therefore, it had to be restrained by Act of Parliament. Prior Thomas de Henton's excessive cutting down of the woods belonging to the Priory, for which he was reprimanded by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1299,<sup>1</sup> may have been due to his desire to make money by supplying fuel for one of the iron furnaces in the neighbourhood, but it is difficult to say whether any of these existed at as early date as that.

1. See page 70.



Drayton, in his "Polyolbion" published in 1612, makes the Sussex woods complain of the injury done them by the iron works :—

" Jove's oak, the warlike ash, vein'd elm, the softer beech,  
Short hazel, maple plain, light asp, the bending wych,  
Tough holly, and smooth birch must altogether burn.  
What should the builder serve, supplies the forger's turn ;  
When under public good base private gain takes hold,  
And we, poor woful woods, to ruin lastly sold."

An immense variety of iron implements and weapons were manufactured in Sussex: firebacks, andirons, horse shoes and nails, monumental grave slabs, rush holders, church bells, hooped guns in the earlier times and afterwards cannon and cannon-balls. The railings round St. Paul's Cathedral and in Eton College cloisters were made in Sussex. It is certainly curious that so important and lucrative an industry which was carried on for so many centuries and in which such a large number of people were employed (50,000 "lusty, able workmen" in the seventeenth century) should have left so little trace of its existence. It needs a very careful search in a wood to discover the spot where the mill stood. If all the masonry has disappeared from the stream, the heaps of slag often grown over with moss and undergrowth are the only indications that remain. A great effort of the imagination is wanted in order to believe that in these now often completely deserted woodland spots scores of men were once habitually engaged digging and carting ore, and cutting down and dragging timber, while the clatter of mill wheels, the blast from the furnaces, the din of the hammers and the clamour of the workshops added to the noise and activity which surrounded an iron mill.

Camden says, in his *Britannia* (1722), "a great deal of meadow ground is turned into ponds and pools for the driving of mills by the flashes which beating with hammers upon iron, fill the neighbourhood round about night and day with continual noise." The industry has left its mark in the names which still exist for field and copse and even village in the

neighbourhood, such as "Minepit Copse," "Furnace Wood," "Ironhill Common," "Hammer."

The four mills in the immediate vicinity were situated in Lynchmere, Fernhurst, Pophall and Linch.

I.—The Lynchmere iron mill was erected close by Lower Lodge Farm within a mile of the Priory, in a copse still known



HIGHBUILDING.

as Furnace Wood. A large pond, a very fine sluice gate and culvert constructed out of large cut blocks of stone and a quantity of iron slag mark the spot. The court roll of 1620 already quoted<sup>1</sup> shows that Anthony Viscount Montague of Cowdray and Thomas Gray had built the mill there, no doubt a few years before. Peerish, the holding on which it was erected, occurs as Parry's in later documents. In the court

1. See page 152.

rolls "Parrys and Hurlands" occurs frequently. The holding was in possession of the Shotter family till 1794 when it passed to Anthony Capron, from whom the Hollist family are descended and who still own the wood where the furnace was situated. Highbuilding, an old house on the road towards Fernhurst where members of the Hollist family still live, is supposed by some to have been the ironmasters' house. This theory is supported by the fact that, according to the court rolls between 1740 and 1780, there were at least two John Shotters "of Highbuilding," and the holding went from father to son till William Shotter surrendered it to Antony Capron in 1794 as above stated, by which time the iron furnace was no longer working. There is also an old farm house in a secluded spot further south known as North Park, which may have been connected with the forge. The furnace was known as North Park Furnace and is mentioned under this name in a list of furnaces drawn up in 1653, although at that time it seems to have been in a ruined condition. Three entries in the Church Register mention the furnaces: in 1631 "a vagrant woman commonly called Long Nell who deceased of North Park furnace"; in 1637 "Loucy a vagabond woman who died at Northpark furnace" and "Eliner Percivall the daughter of Mary Percivall a wandering harlot burnt at the iron furnace in north park." This iron mill ceased to be used in 1776.

II.—The Fernhurst mill lay in Verdley wood in the valley between Verdley Place and the ruins of Verdley Castle, close to an old house called Surney Hatch. There are practically no remains of masonry. Deep pits and heaps of slag are the only means of locating the spot where the mill stood. John Butler, the son of Walter Butler of Stanley,<sup>1</sup> is said by Canon Capes<sup>2</sup> to have established this furnace but it is more probable that he revived one that already existed, for as early as 1342 the *Nonae Rolls* record that the Rector of Fernhurst received 10s. for the tithe of iron ore. Anyhow Butler's mill prospered, for he entered into contracts with the Government for sup-

1. See page 120.

2. "Rural Life in Hampshire."



plying cannon during the American and Spanish wars in 1762 and 1783. "The old skill in the industrial processes had died out in the neighbourhood and the workmen imported from the north made much of their own importance and little of the interests of their master. But in time he replaced them with the native labour which had been gradually trained and with the help of his faithful clerk, George Denyer, whose tombstone stands in the churchyard, did a large and prosperous trade."<sup>1</sup> The firebacks which Lord Montague placed in all the rooms in Cowdray House were made here. This foundry was one of the last to survive. It still existed in 1788.

III.—Pophall lay on the extreme northern boundary of the parish of Lynchmere and of the county. The village of Hammer which has lately grown up close by takes its name from the iron mill. The name Pophall has now disappeared. It occurs as Popholl, Pophole or Pophal in all the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century maps, but in Kitchin's map of 1777 it is not marked. The mill stood on the stream just where the counties of Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire meet. There is a good deal of the masonry of the sluice gates still standing and the usual heaps of slag. In the claybed of the brick fields close by cannon balls have been dug up and part of a heavy cannon. A very old cottage with stone walls and timberwork stands on the higher ground on the Sussex side and must certainly date back to the days when the mill was working. Christopher Baker (1573-4) mentions the Pophall furnace in his list as belonging to Lord Montague. Roger Quennell is referred to as tenant of Pophall in the court roll of 1615 and in the court roll of 1620 the iron mill is specifically mentioned—*molendino ferario communiter vocato Popehole Hammer*. It is included in the lists of 1653 and 1664,<sup>2</sup> and in 1730 Lord Montague is still in possession of "the hammer or mills at Popes Hole."<sup>3</sup> The mill at Imbhams near Haslemere was also owned by him, and Robert Quennell the iron master

1. "Rural Life in Hampshire."

2. Victoria History of Surrey, vol. II, p. 272.

3. Camden's "Brittania."

was one of the witnesses to Richard Shorye's will in 1587. But we must refrain from entering into particulars about iron mills other than those in the immediate vicinity of the Priory.

IV.—About the Linch mill there is little to say. Buried in a wood known as Inholms copse about a mile below Redford Common, very little remains of the forge can be found. A pond, pits, heaps of slag and a small stone culvert mark the spot. Near by is an old and picturesque farm house called Slathurst, dating back several hundred years. The only mention of these ironworks is as early as 1342 when the *Nonae* return shows that the rector of Linch received 10s. for the tithe of iron ore. According to local tradition the works here were very extensive.

The protest made by the woods in Drayton's poem, quoted above, has not been in vain. The oak, the ash, the birch, the hazel and the holly reign supreme once again in the now secluded woodland valleys, from which the thriving iron industry had once deposed them.



FERNHURST



#### VERDLEY CASTLE RUINS

(From Rouse's "Beauties of Sussex," 1825).

### CHAPTER XII.

#### Shulbrede and its Surroundings.

Adown the vale in lone sequestered nook,  
Where skirting woods imbrown the dimpling brook,  
The ruined convent lies.  
Still oft at eve belated shepherd swains  
See the cowed spectre skim the folded plains,  
There like a picture lies my lowly seat,  
A rural sheltered unobserved retreat.

(Gilbert White, 1789).

**W**HEN I remember the records that have been collected of other Priors—of Merton Priory for instance, also an Augustinian house, the cartulary of which comprises some hundred and forty folios transcribed in a quarto volume of 350 pages, not very readable perhaps but full of information—or the chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, that wonderfully vivid picture of mon-



astic life in the Middle Ages ; and when I think of the great monastic ruins that are bywords for their beauty, each with its full history, it seems a presumption to suppose that these few pages on this very small and unimportant Priory and the little village adjoining it can claim any attention whatever either from the historical, archæological or literary point of view. And yet the old building exhales an atmosphere to which few can be quite insensible. It compels attention. As much as anything this peculiar magic is due to its unique and lonely position. Though within fifty miles of London and hardly an hour's walk from so popular a resort as Haslemere, in the outskirts of which the jerry-builder is so busy, the valley of Shulbrede is guarded by a very steep ridge of hills, and the wooded slopes, scarce broken by a single cottage roof, must look to-day very much as they did when the Augustinian Canons roamed about hunting, fishing, gardening and praying.

To pass over Lynchmere Common from the north is not only to come into another county, but into another world. Descending into the valley of the weald, the villa-bespattered panorama of Hindhead far behind, completely hidden from view, you come upon vast tracts of wood and meadowland broken by a cornfield here and there and watered by numberless little winding brooks, which join in a stream to meet the western Rother near Selham. The far horizon is bounded by a misty line of downs fading away into the southern haze.

But let us approach the Priory from the south, noting some interesting features as we pass along. Shulbrede lies about six miles to the north of Cowdray. The way from Easebourne cuts through the wood straight up the old coach-road over North Heath to the top of the hill, where there is a wonderful view of the weald. "No matter how far or in how many lands you may have travelled you will be compelled to own that you have witnessed few finer scenes than this."<sup>1</sup> It was on this spot, as late as 1799, that the mail was robbed. Two brothers were found guilty of the robbery, and after they had been executed at Horsham their bodies were brought to this

1. L. J. Jennings' "Field Paths and Green Lanes" (Surrey and Sussex).

spot and hung from a gallows in chains. It is difficult to believe that it was not till 1833 that the barbarous practice of hanging in chains was finally abolished.

Deep in the wood near the top of the ridge towards Bexley hill are the remains (now very difficult to find) of Verdley Castle. Even in the eighteenth century it was said that the



SHULBREDE AND LYNCHMERE.

place was "only known to such as hunt the Martin cat." To-day there is only a very uneven bit of ground, overgrown with trees on the ridge of the hill, where the view stretches right across a sea of trees to the heights of Blackdown. And unless it occurred to anyone to look under the moss and examine the loose stones they would never know that any building had stood there. What this building really was remains a mystery to this day. The foundations that were discovered showed it to be a quadrangular structure of no very

great size but too large for a hermitage, with immensely thick walls and with what would seem to have been a moat round it. It is supposed by some to have been a Norman fortress, and by others a shelter for insane persons belonging to the nunnery of Easebourne; but, as Grose remarks, unless that house, which consisted of only five or six nuns, had much more than their proportionate share of lunatics, this supposition cannot be likely. By others again it was supposed to be a grange belonging to the monks of Shulbrede, but the most likely conjecture is that it was a hunting lodge used by the Lords de Bohun of Midhurst. There is an engraving in Rouse's "Beauties of Sussex" of the ruins as they appeared in 1775.

Verdley remained emparked up to the middle of the sixteenth century. It was in the possession of John Aske, who petitioned the King in 1541 to exchange it for the lands of the Abbey of Ellerton in Yorkshire. The manor of Verdley is stated in the petition to be held of the King as of his Honour of Petworth, and mention is made of the Great Park, a close called Abbot's Close, and its valuable timber. The exchange was effected and the King retained the property during his lifetime. It was granted to Sir Antony Browne by Edward VI, and became part of the Cowdray estate.<sup>1</sup>

The little village of Henley lies at the foot of the hill towards the north, and can be reached by an old paved road which is said to date back to Roman times. On the other side of the new main road westward is a wood which still bears the name of "Cavalry Quarters," where a troop of royalist horse remained concealed during the occupation of Cowdray by the Parliamentary forces. Waller marched in November, 1643, through Haslemere over Blackdown to Midhurst with a large army of Parliamentary troops to relieve Arundel, which was held by Sir Edward Ford of Harting, who surrendered after a siege of twenty-three days.

The road winds north to the village of Fernhurst formerly

1. Verdley Place, built by the late Lord Davey, is now the property of Sir Felix Schuster, Bart.



known as Farnhurst or Farnest. The name represents Farnhurst, *i.e.* the wooded knoll belonging to Fara. A local tradition that the origin of the name is "furnace," so called because of the iron furnace which existed close by in the fourteenth century, is merely fanciful. Fernhurst is not mentioned in Domesday nor does it appear in the three earliest subsidy rolls for Sussex, but the name occurs in 1281 when certain lands are transferred to Richard Searle to hold in one case "by render of a rose" and in another case "by render of a clove" (*unum clavum gariophili*).<sup>1</sup> The church is dedicated to St. Margaret and was rebuilt and restored in 1859 and 1881. The only ancient features which remain are some Norman windows, part of a wall painting and the tie beams of the roof. It was originally a chapelry of Easebourne Priory. In 1520 Thomas Trybe of Farnhurst left "to St. Margaret's light of Farnhurst a shepe"; and in 1536 William Byggenolde left "to St. Margaret's light of Farnhurst two shepe; to Saynt Sounday's<sup>2</sup> light, a shepe; to St. Anthony's light, a shepe."<sup>3</sup> In the proceedings of the Committee of Plundered Ministers £50 is entered "from the rectory of Farnest" sequestered from Lord Viscount Montague and appropriated to increase the church revenues of Fernhurst in 1646.<sup>4</sup>

In passing through Fernhurst, where many new houses have recently been built, it may be noted that in the early nineteenth century there still existed here an industry for extracting vinegar from wood. A row of cottages at the cross roads, known as the Vinegar Cottages, were pulled down not many years ago to make way for the village Institute. Another group of cottages still standing is known as The Cylinders, where the charcoal connected with industry was stored.

The road to Shulbrede strikes off westward, over a bridge which is traditionally supposed to have been built by the

1. *Feet of Fines*, 9 Edward I.

2. Easter Day.

3. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XII, p. 71.

4. *Sussex Arch. Coll.*, vol. XXXVI.

Canons, and passes Hawksfold<sup>1</sup> and further on the very attractive old house known as Highbuilding which has already been referred to. Turning a mile further on towards the north the gable of the Priory rises out of the trees in its lonely valley; woods all round as far as the eye can see.

It is a place of all others to watch the year budding, blooming, fading and dying; and it is an ever unsolved problem to settle which stage of the great mystery is the most enchanting. The beauty of the one you are watching seems always to surpass the others till their turn comes. The scene on which the eye rests has not the grandeur of snow-capped mountains and crystal lakes; it has none of the blinding richness of southern colours: nor the marvels of vegetation of tropical lands. It is peaceful England full of charm and kindness, homely, hospitable and infinitely satisfying. Disraeli driving through this country on his way to Woolbeding from Godalming wrote in 1837: "I entered a region of picturesque and sylvan beauty I have never seen equalled."

The woods stretch down from the hilltops into the valleys and you may wander in them for hours without striking a high road through a maze of pathways leading nowhere in particular. The green cart tracks, cut up uniformly by two deep muddy ruts with a worn horse path between, fork out in all directions through the thick undergrowth, sometimes tunnelling under the arching foliage, sometimes cut along the slope like terrace walks. They wind up to the common of heather and gorse or out into clearings on the hillside, where the copse cutters are at work chopping down tree stems that have reached the right age, cutting hop poles and chestnut fencing and slicing out hoops. When the oaks are being felled the sound of the axe and saw can be heard as well as the sharp strokes of the chopper echoing through the wood. The woodmen cut themselves narrow winding passages through the dense tangle of branches and brambles and ferns by which they reach their work.

1. William Haukesfold held land in Fernhurst in 1367. *Feet of Fines*, 40 Edward III. The modern residence of Hawksfold was built by Mr. Antony Salvin in the seventies.

Here and there a wanderer may chance upon a charcoal-burners' encampment where the wood is piled in long high stacks. Their turf cabins stand close to the rounded heap of wood called a "pett" which they have to guard allowing it to smoulder but never to burn. They belong to the woods even more than the woodmen, for they sleep inside these snug little cabins on a bed of straw with a bit of sacking as a door curtain. Sometimes their wives and families accompany them



CHARCOAL BURNER'S CABIN.

and they stay on in one place till they have filled their sacks with charcoal and then they move to some other spot and the black hearth about thirty feet in diameter, where their fire has stood, again becomes overgrown with grass and ferns and shoots of sprouting trees.

Charcoal burning has been handed down in a few families in the Weald for many centuries. There is a record of an order to the Sheriff of Sussex, in 1307, to have 200 quarters of charcoal burnt in the Weald and shipped to Boulogne for the use of the King's army.

The charcoal burners are generally elderly men. It needs



years of experience to keep the fire smouldering steadily for its full three days and three nights in all weathers. Before long no doubt the industry will die out as charcoal is already produced in towns on a different system. With the decay of the iron industry the value of charcoal declined but it was still needed for the making of gunpowder, the drying of hops and other purposes.

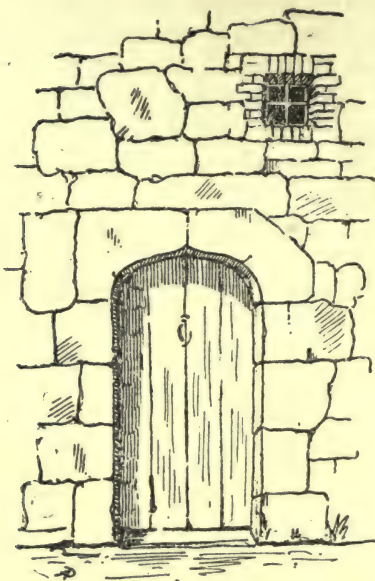
“Woodland countries are interesting on many accounts,” says Cobbett, who often wandered through this part of Sussex on his rural rides. “Not so much on account of their masses of green leaves as on account of the variety of sounds and sights and incidents that they afford. Even in the winter the coppices are beautiful to the eye while they comfort the mind with the idea of shelter and warmth. In Spring they change their hue from day to day for two whole months, which is about the time from the first appearance of the delicate leaves of the birch to the full expansion of those of the ash ; and even before the leaves come at all to intercept the view what, in the vegetable creation, is so delightful to behold as the bed of a coppice bespattered with primroses and bluebells ? The opening of the birch leaves is a signal for the pheasant to begin to crow, for the blackbird to whistle and the thrush to sing ; and just when the oak buds begin to look reddish, and not a day before, the whole tribe of finches burst forth in songs from every bough while the lark, imitating them all, carries the joyous sounds to the sky.”

The Spring always makes one believe it is the fairest of the seasons because it comes with such gentle allurements to soften once again the roughness that has passed. All birds begin to try their notes. The peewits circle in the meadow round the house with their petulant and troubled cry. And the starlings come out of holes in the walls, jabber round the house and perch in a row on the topmost ridge of the roof. The tulips and hyacinths shining in the first warm sun against the old, grey walls, or the clusters of daffodils on the banks of the moat, where the moorhens nest, make brilliant spots of colour which can be seen from high up on the hillside. But the colouring of the hills is very restrained. The wonderful

pinky brown bloom over the grey branch-tops ever deepening till it changes to green, but at first almost like some soft fur, is broken here and there by the foamy spray of blossom from a wild cherry and the dark blots of pine clumps of holly or of some ancient yew.

There are many giant yews about in West Sussex, especially in churchyards. Their presence there is accounted for in many

ways. They are said to have been planted close to churches for protection as their wood was used in ancient times for making bows. Others hold that they were set up as warnings to shepherds to keep their sheep from straying into churchyards which were unprotected by walls. A more probable reason appears to be that a yew was planted near the graves of the dead as an emblem of immortality. In Shulbrede valley they stand with their unchanging, sombre green amidst the short lived chestnut, hazel, birch and ash, like guardians of the woods.



DOOR OF GREENHILL.

When Summer comes the rolling masses of foliage are more uniform. They turn

the whole valley into a billowy sea of green. The tracks become shady and dark and up in the beech clump is a cool retreat for a hot day. The tall, gray, silvery tree stems stand towering up like the shafts of some huge Cathedral vaulted above with a dome of shimmering green. A few bright rays piercing into the cool shade cast a splash of light on to the red carpet of crisp dead leaves. This curious steep mound may once have been the site of a building or an ancient earthwork, as its sudden prominence seems hardly

natural. Now the beeches make it appear still higher, so that it stands out as a land-mark in the valley. Close to the clump on the slope of the hill which is known as Greenhill is a very picturesque old house, the remains of a larger building, which village tradition maintains was connected by a secret passage to the Priory. Moses Hill commands the valley on this side. The old farm-house on the summit was inhabited by a member of the Shotter family in 1774<sup>1</sup> and is of very ancient origin. It is what is known as an "open hall" farm-house dating back probably to the early Plantagenet times. The original plan consisted of a large central hall open to the roof with an open hearth fire.<sup>2</sup> After having been divided up into cottages it is now a private house. Several modern houses surround it but the slopes down into the valley are wooded and untouched. Here and there through a clearing as one descends one can catch sight of the Priory in the valley below.

No one can describe the blaze of colour in a summer garden. The small formal garden at the Priory shows up the brighter for its surroundings of meadow and wood. The lilies, the tall blue spikes of delphiniums, the heavy nodding heads of white and red phloxes, the clusters of rambling roses, make a brilliant array against the dark green hedges and grey weatherworn stone of the house. The monks' garden was probably more utilitarian, herbs and vegetables taking up most of the ground. But perhaps the yellow mimulus which grows wild in the stream, and the wild pansies and marigold which persistently appear in the best weeded beds, and the wallflowers which perch themselves out of reach in the crannies of the walls, gave colour to the garden even then.

For some days in early Autumn, before the storms and frost have stripped the trees, the brilliance of the varied dying leaves is almost dazzling. Every tone from green to crimson is splashed over the combes. The golden spray of the birch, the lemon yellow of the rustling poplars, the golden oak and

1. Henry Courtnage's will. James Shotter, overseer.

2. For description see "Bygone Haslemere," chap. xxvii.



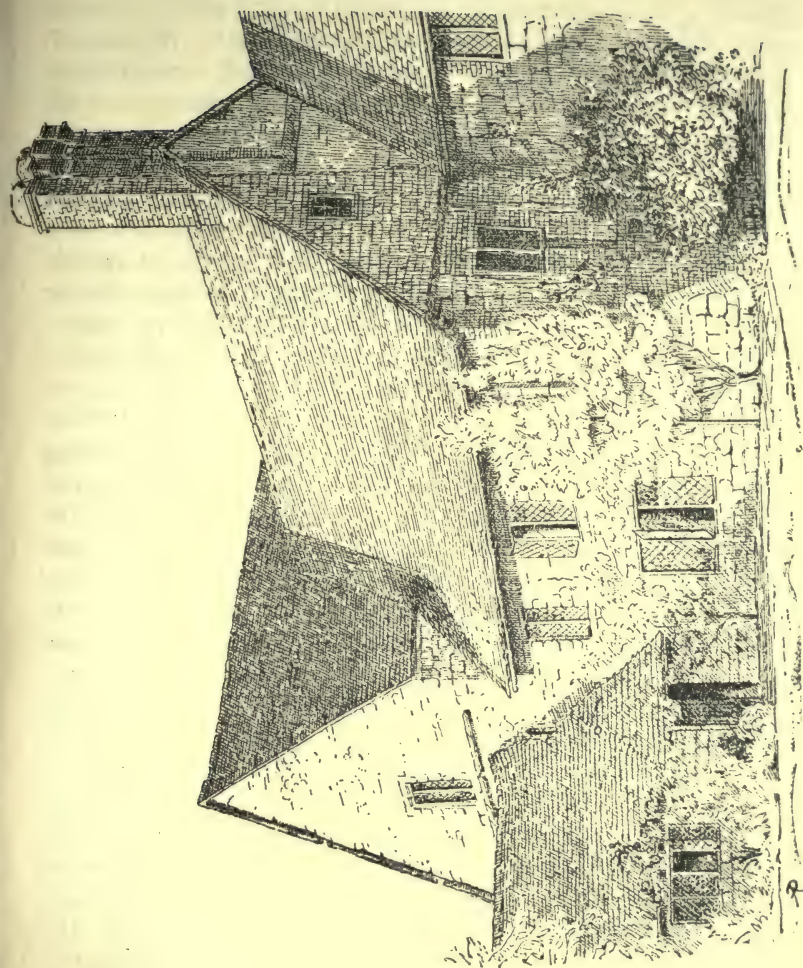
ash and the russet beech, all are intertwined and woven together in a golden tumult and the meadow is covered with a blue veil of wild scabious. Later, again, the woods take on a tarnished hue of red against the purple bloom of the hills.

But when the trees are quite bare and all their graceful limbs exposed, when the lichen-covered trunks of the oaks stand out in the thicket, and the network of branches blends into wonderful shades of pale grey and brown, when the valley becomes more deserted and tourists and trippers take refuge in their towny homes, then the Weald of Sussex is perhaps at its best. The storm and rain seem to give health and strength. The lonely muddy lanes are all one's own. To come into the valley on a misty evening in December, a delicious smell of lichen, dead leaves and earth—the breath of the woods—pervading the air, little points of flame sparkling on the hillside from the woodmen's fires and sending up their curling blue smoke into the sky. To walk down a steep pathway through the copse to the pale mysterious, lonely country below is like breaking into an enchanted land. And to pass from the chill evening air to the welcome side of a fire of great blazing logs, hissing, crackling, popping, flaring, whispering and glowing; to sit and watch its red-hot caves, its licking flames and smouldering ash is a moment of warm consoling peace. Then the imagination can wander back into the distant past and ponder for a while on times of which so little trace is left.

When such a time cometh  
I do retire  
Into an old room  
Beside a bright fire,  
Oh, pile a bright fire.

And there I sit  
Reading old things  
Of knights and lorn damsels  
While the wind sings,  
Oh, drearily sings.

It is a time to sit and dream of the past and to conjure up the presence of those who have been here before me. Ralph



SOUTH SIDE OF THE PRIORY.



the Founder snatching a holiday from his important judicial and diplomatic duties to come and supervise his army of builders ; Prior Thomas de Henton brooding over his reprimand from the Archbishop of Canterbury ; William le Chanoyne returning guiltily from his poaching expedition in Arundel Park ; Robert de Glottynge doing penance for his " enormous excesses " ; Robert Coytar wandering about the woods " to the hurt and scandal of his order and of religion " ; John Coldell beaming over his election as Prior ; Thomas Clune scribbling " Disce Pati " on his book after the row over the common seal ; Henry Offerton complaining to the Bishop that his colleagues talked too much ; Bishop Yonge arriving from London, very much bored, to be installed as Prior ; William Burrey selling his little black brache to Lady Lisle ; George Waldern trembling before the curses and gibes of Richard Layton ; Layton despatching the " bawdy " Prior to Cromwell with his indignant letter ; the canons departing out into the world with only their beds " of the King's great charity " ; Prior George going up to undertake the duties of rector of Lynchmere ; John Todman trying to make a deserted Priory into a habitable home ; Perter Thecstone doffing his sword and buckler, his canvas doublet, his yellow hose, his boots and spurs and putting on his velvet nightcap before going to bed ; Richard Shorye settling down in the comfortable chamber in the gate-house with his feather bed and best joynd bedstead ; the " lover of nature," Roger Shotter, bringing people suffering from " foul and dangerous sorances " into his " Ould studie " and curing them ; John Shotter the favourite son going off to Bridge with the pewter and silver and his carved mantelpiece ; widow Boxall (who I am sure knew how to use the bacon loft) fussing about her household duties, Roger junior in his old age taking the stones from the ruins to build his house at Pitfold ; the Stennings finding the old buildings now only just escaping from complete destruction ; successive stewards holding manorial court in the Prior's Chamber and the homage enjoying their free dinner ; a man remembered as Powell carrying off a cartload of bacon from the bacon loft when Samuel Edwards left the farm in



1822 ; Bob James the old sexton now dead, sleeping when a boy, as he once told me, in the ingle nook of the dining room fireplace before an early start to Godalming then the terminus of the railway ; and lastly myself seeing the grey Priory gable for the first time in 1902, and knowing with that strange instinctive certainty that it was to be my home.

Always inhabited for over 720 years the old house has no cold abandoned feeling about it. Filled with the spirit of human companionship, it seems to give out an atmosphere of welcome and hospitality, and invites one to trace back the trivial records of the many men and women who are linked together by the fact that the same old grey walls have given them comfort and shelter.





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*By the same Author.*

THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE.

THE DECLINE OF ARISTOCRACY.

DEMOCRACY AND DIPLOMACY.

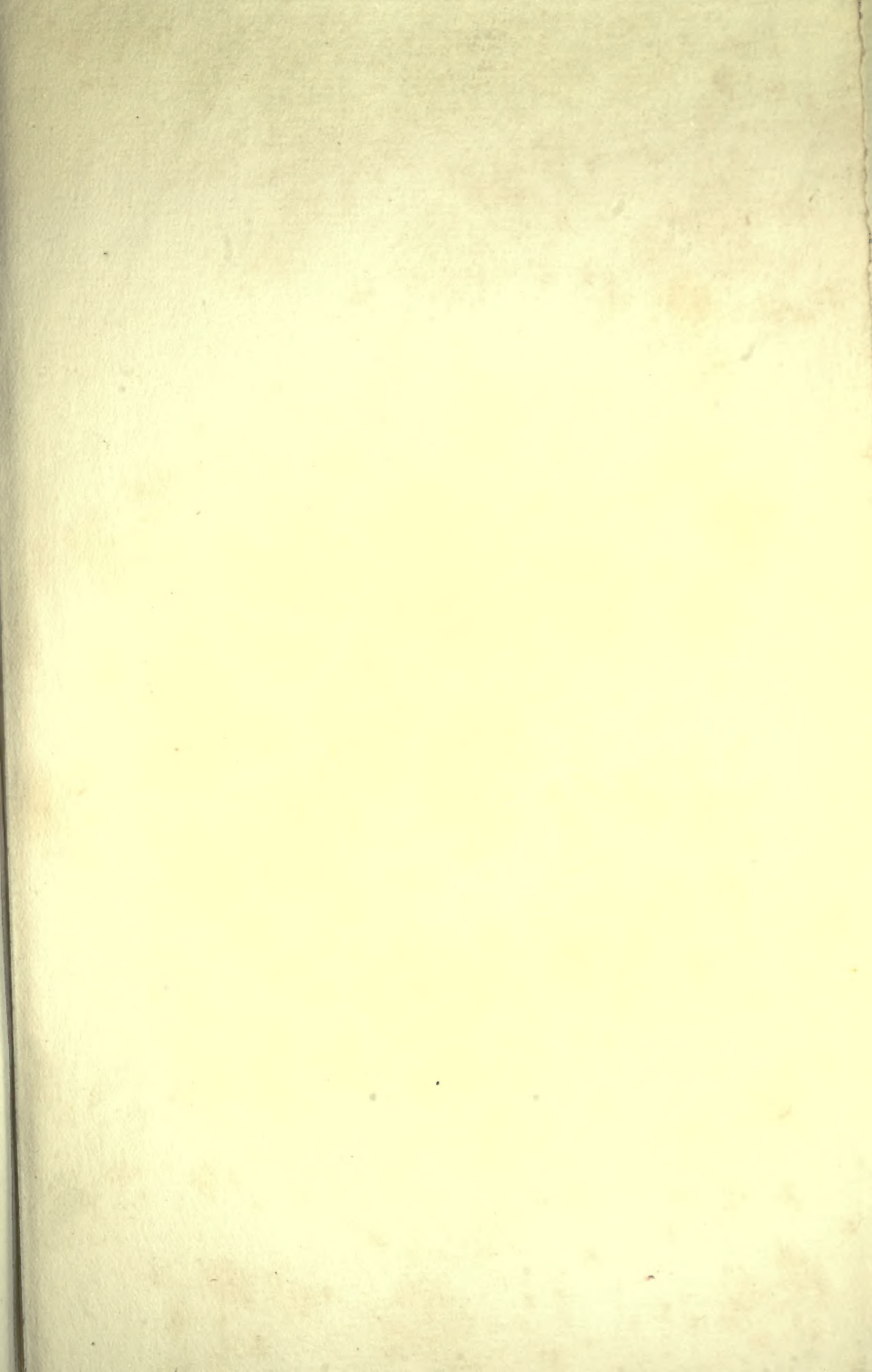
WARS AND TREATIES (1815-1914).

A CONFLICT OF OPINION.

*(With Dorothea Ponsonby).*

REBELS AND REFORMERS.







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